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A HISTORY OF BULLOCK COUNTY

1866 - 1906

John Langdon Rumph

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A HISTORY OF BULLOCK COUNTY, ALABAMA

1866 - 1906

John Langdon Rumph

A Thesis

Submitted to

the Graduate Faculty of the
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in Partial Fulfillment of the
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VITA

John Langdon Rumph, son of John L. Rumph and Willie Lott Rumph, was born February 10, 1930, in Perote, Alabama. He attended Perote High School and Inverness High School, graduating from the latter in May, 1948. In June, 1948, he entered the freshman class of Troy State Teachers College, and graduated from that institution with a B. S. degree in December, 1951. He taught in the Mt. Pleasant Junior High School near Enterprise, Alabama, from September, 1951, to May, 1953. He entered the Graduate School of the Alabama Polytechnic Institute in June, 1953.

THESIS ABSTRACT
A HISTORY OF BULLOCK COUNTY

John L. Rumph, Jr.

Master of Arts, August 27, 1955
(B. S., Troy State Teachers College, 1951)

164 Typed Pages

Directed by Alfred W. Reynolds

Bullock County, located in the southeastern part of Alabama, was formed in 1866. The county was created from parts of Pike, Macon, Barbour, and Montgomery counties.

The first settlers in this area came about 1835, and the county was almost fully settled by 1860. Bullock County lies in part in the Black Belt of Alabama and its citizens tend to act and think in the Black Belt tradition. There was a considerable planter culture before the Civil War and the presence of many large plantations devoted largely to cotton resulted in the county's having a population ratio of four to one in favor of the Negro.

The economy of the county has depended almost entirely on agriculture. Cotton has always been the leading cash crop, and an over-dependence on it and the low prices in the latter part of the nineteenth century caused a great deal of suffering among farmers of the county.

This thesis is an effort to present a general picture of the county's growth and development since 1866. The following areas of development have been considered: economic, political, educational, religious, social

problems, and social life. There are also chapters on the geography, early history, population, and laws of the county.

Information has been drawn mainly from the files of several newspapers published in Union Springs, and from manuscripts, letters, and diaries of the period. Information has also been drawn from various federal, state, and county documents.

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CHAPTER I

GEOGRAPHY AND TOPOGRAPHY

Bullock County is situated in the southeastern part of Alabama about one hundred miles from the geographical center of the state and about forty miles from the Georgia state line. The county forms roughly the dividing line between the Black Belt and Wiregrass sections. The county is of irregular shape, its greatest dimensions east and west being 35 miles and north and south, 25 miles.

The county has an area of about 610 square miles, comprising approximately 388,480 acres of land. The elevation of the area ranges from 200 to 600 feet with the average elevation being about 500 feet.¹

Bullock County presents an interesting geologic history in the variety and beauty of its landscape and the nature and variety of its soils. The most outstanding physical characteristic of the county is the Chunnenuggee Ridge, known locally as "The Ridge." The Ridge divides the county into two parts and forms the watershed of three river systems—the Pea, the Conecuh, and Tallapoosa. This ridge is a continuation of the high ground that enters the state near West Point, Georgia. The ridge runs southwestwardly

¹J. F. Hamilton, A Study of the Social and Economic Conditions in Bullock County (Unpublished master's thesis, Alabama Polytechnic Institute), 1939, p. 5.

across the county separating the prairie region and the sandy hill region. North of the ridge is a belt of low hills and irregular ridges with a network of "V" shaped valleys and wet weather streams known as the "hill prairie country."² High Ridge in the southwestern section of the county marks the highest elevation. The lowest point is five miles north of Fitzpatrick where Line Creek leaves the county. The western portion of the county is very hilly and rough except in the extreme northern part where the land is fairly level. The roughest terrain is found along the escarpment of Chunnenuggee in the northeastern section.³

The central and eastern parts of the county are rolling but not very hilly. There is, however, enough slope for sufficient drainage and easy cultivation of crops. Here are found the eroded red clay hills so familiar to the southern scene.

In the extreme southern section of the county are found the "piney woods" and "sand beds" that stretch away into Pike County.

The county is drained by Pea and Conecuh Rivers and Oakfuskee, Old Town, Cubahatchee, and Line Creeks. These streams are small, somewhat like the creeks of central and northern Alabama, and none is navigable. Pea River, famed

²M. B. Owen, The Story of Alabama—A History of the State (New York, 1949), p. 451.

³Ibid.

in the Indian War of 1837, has its source in the northeastern part of the county and forms part of the eastern boundary. Its watershed includes the eastern portion of the county and a large part of the southern section. Conecuh River has its source in the springs which issue from the ridge at Union Springs, and it drains the central and western parts of the county south of the Chunnenugee Ridge. The course of both rivers is marked by dense swamps and forests of hardwood and pine. The streams proceed at a leisurely rate and have long been popular with fishermen. Town, Oakfuskee, and Cuba-hatchee Creeks are found north of the Ridge and are fast running streams. They empty into the Tallapoosa System. Indian Creek, Sandy Creek, Cowikee, Coleman Creek, and Bug-hall Creek are other streams of local note. They are part of the above-mentioned systems.⁴

Bullock County has few natural resources. The most important one has always been timber. The pine and hardwood forests afforded material for a few local industries during the 1880's and 1890's, but timber was not until long after the turn of the century to play an important role in the county's economy. Some iron bearing rocks were found in the extreme southern section of the county during the 1890's, but no serious effort to exploit this resource was made.

⁴Eugene Smith, Geological Survey of Alabama (Montgomery, 1883), p. 486.

Bullock County has always been an agricultural county and its most important natural resource has been its soils. Of the three hundred soil types in Alabama, Bullock has thirty-two.⁵ This wide variety of soils makes possible a diversified system of agriculture. The soils of the county may be broadly grouped into upland soils derived from lime-bearing rock, upland soils derived from unconsolidated sandy deposits of a later age, second terrace soils originating from rather recent stream action, and first bottom soils subject to annual inundation and still in the process of formation. The oldest geological formations in the county are the Selma Chalk in the northwest part. The next stage is the Ripley Marl, which, at depths varying from a few feet to many feet, underlies most of the county. Immediately under the Ripley formation is a reddish sandy clay ranging from fifteen to thirty feet deep in the northern part and deeper in the southern.⁶ The principal soil types in the county are Susquehanna fine sandy loam, Susquehanna clay, Norfolk fine sand, Ruston fine sandy loam, Oktibbeha clay, and Houston clay.⁷

The Black Belt soil province covers about one-third of the county, while the remainder lies within the lower

⁵United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Map of Alabama, Bullock County Sheet, 1913.

⁶Eugene Smith, op. cit., p. 486.

⁷Ibid.

coastal plain. The Black Belt section is that part north of the Chunnenuggee Ridge.⁸

The United States Census of 1880 divides the county into three soil areas in its report on cotton production.⁹ These areas were the black lands north of the ridge, the post oak lands in the west and northwest, and the Conecuh and Pea River areas. W. M. Stakely in his report stated that the Black Belt in Bullock County was five to ten miles wide and comprised about one-half of the arable land. The uplands of this section were covered with hickory and pine trees and were indicative of good cotton land. The soil is heavy clay loam, gray to black in color, and ranges from three to twelve inches in depth. Three-fourths of this land was planted in cotton. On fresh land this area produced about 800 pounds of seed cotton per acre which would decrease to around 500 pounds after twenty years of use. In 1880 there was slight damage from washing.¹⁰

According to the report of J. L. Moultrie, the soils of the western part of the county were three to six inches deep and ranged in color from grayish red to almost black. Three-fourths of this land was also planted in cotton and was

⁸Owen, op. cit., p. 371.

⁹United States Census of 1880, I, Cotton Production in the United States (Washington, 1884), pp. 128-129.

¹⁰Ibid.

capable of producing 800 pounds of seed cotton per acre. Moultrie suggested a more diversified agriculture for this land.¹¹ J. L. Stinson reported that one-half of the area drained by the Pea and Conecuh Rivers was loam soil while the remainder was sandy soil covered with long leaf pine and black jack. These soils ranged from one to six inches in depth and about one-half was devoted to cotton culture. Ten year cultivation of these lands would reduce the cotton yield by twenty per cent. This reduction is even greater on the lighter soils, with a much shorter cotton staple. These lands were already showing damage from washing in 1880. The pine lands were not considered worth the trouble of clearing them. No land was reported lying out except for lack of labor. About one-twentieth was reported idle for this reason.¹²

The variety and richness of soils and lack of other resources have made Bullock County almost dependent entirely upon agriculture as a source of wealth. The typical holding before the Civil War seems to be one of small farms rather than large plantations. The soil type that gave rise to the larger plantations comprised only one-fifth of the arable land. There are few records or remains that would indicate a large planter culture. The wealthiest planters were found

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid.

along the Chunnenuggee Ridge north of Union Springs where they farmed the black soils of the prairie. Since the county was not formed until 1866, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain the number of slave-holdings in that area. The economy of the county has been so geared to the soil that the very life of the people—their customs, their education, culture, even religion—was dependent on the bounties of nature during the growing season, or later on the price of cotton.

The climate of Bullock is generally mild and free from extremes of temperature. The normal growing season is from 240 to 300 days. The average annual temperature is 65 degrees.¹³

The average rainfall is 52 inches. Droughts usually occur in May and June, and in October and November. Thunder storms occur every month of the year, but most frequently in the summer. Destructive hailstorms are rare in Bullock County. High winds are fairly common during the spring months and severe local storms often do much damage. Tropical storms from the southeast at times do much damage in the early fall.

The climate of the county has always been one of its greatest assets. It provides a long growing season and the

¹³Howard Smith, Soil Survey of Bullock County (Washington, 1915), pp. 8-17.

atmospheric conditions favorable to luxuriant plant growth and rich agriculture. The sunshine and mild temperature are conducive to human health and happiness.¹⁴

¹⁴Ibid.

CHAPTER II

PIONEER DAYS

The original territory of Bullock County was among the last sections of the state to be settled. The western half of the county was included in the Creek Cession of 1814, and the settlement there is about twenty years older than the rest of the county.¹ Very little is known about these settlements. There is no evidence of large farms or plantations in this area. Because of the physical character of the section it is likely that these settlements were of the log cabin type on small clearings. Wolf Pit is an old settlement in this section of the county and tradition has it that there was a pit to trap wolves there at an early date.

The eastern part of the county was not opened to settlement until the 1830's. This part of the county was included in the Creek Cession of 1832, and was settled during and after the Indian removal.

The area known as Bullock County lies in the extreme southern section of the Upper Creek Territory. While indications of Indian habitation have been found, no positive location of Indian towns can be made.² Mounds and camp

¹Bullock County Folder (Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama).

²M. B. Owen, A Social and Economic History of Alabama (Montgomery, 1938), p. 500.

sites are located in several parts of the county but none appear to be permanent. Several mounds are located along Indian Creek on the old Dasinger place. Arrowheads, pottery, and other artifacts of Indian life are found along Pea River, Double Creek, Indian Creek, and around the Chunne-nuggee section. J. L. Rumph and C. W. Rumph have a large collection of arrowheads and pottery found in these areas. Channagii, an upper Creek town, was located on the Ridge, though tradition places it closer to present day Suspension.³ J. Marion Sims, in "Story of My Life," tells of passing Indian settlements and hearing the cries of wild animals on his way to Mr. Baldwin's plantation near Union Springs.⁴

The county was on the outskirts of the Creek Indian War of 1836-1837. The famous battle of Hobdy's Bridge took place just across the river from Bullock. There were some incidents in the eastern portion of the county mostly around Midway and Three Notch, on the Three Notch Road. From Midway, in March of 1837, a detachment of 22 Barbour Rangers, a volunteer group, was sent to Martin's Creek where some Indians were scouting. In an engagement with the Indians a Lt. Patterson was killed and a Lt. Cowan lost an arm.⁵

³Peter Brannon, "Indians in Alabama," Alabama Historical Quarterly, Vol 12 (April, 1950), p. 150.

⁴Quoted by Peter Brannon, "Through The Years," Montgomery Advertiser, February 27, 1938.

⁵Interview with Dr. J. M. Glenn of Midway, Alabama.

Another incident occurred near Three Notch when three men were murdered. William C. Jordan gives this account of the affair:

Old man Watson, his son and a man named Irwin undertook to run off some cattle down below Three Notch, then called Fort Watson. Going through the swamp near Bluff Creek, they were ambushed by Indians and killed. They were buried near the road leading to Three Notch.⁶

With the removal of the Indians from eastern Alabama, the area of present day Bullock County was open to settlement. The pioneers came into the county along the old Federal Road from Fort Mitchell to Montgomery and along the old Three Notch Road which crosses the county. The Three Notch Road has been the most important line of transportation in the county's history. This road, so called from the characteristic surveys blaze, ran from Fort Bambridge to Pensacola, Florida. Known as road number six, it was commissioned by the War Department as a military emergency measure in June, 1824.⁷ Captain Daniel Burch was ordered to construct a road, his instructions reading "...you will make a road so as to admit the movements of carts and wagons...and make bridges over all principal streams..."⁸ The road could not have been much more than a trail, for it was 233 miles long and Captain Burch's orders continued:

⁶William C. Jordan, "Midway, Alabama," (MS, Department of Archives and History, Montgomery, Alabama).

⁷Peter Brannon, "Through the Years," Montgomery Advertiser, November 5, 1934.

⁸Ibid.

"It is desirable that the work be performed as early as possible and at as little expense as possible."⁹ The road entered Bullock County near Guerrryton, crossed the Ridge at Enon, and continued south to Three Notch. The latter was originally Fort Watson, not being known as Three Notch until the Central of Georgia Railroad crossed the old road there. From Three Notch the road continued southwest across the county, passing about two miles north and west of Perote at Blue's Old Stand and thence to Seller's Cross Roads and Pike County. Contrary to local tradition Andrew Jackson did not blaze this road. Georgians used the Three Notch Road to settle Enon, Midway, and Perote. These early settlers found most of the county wild and unsettled in the late 1830's. The woods were full of deer and wolves.¹⁰ Mills were few and far between. William Jordan's father had a hand mill which required two stout men to run. It was used night and day during the fall of 1839, an extremely dry year.¹¹

The first white settler in the area around Union Springs was B. F. Baldwin. The several springs there had long been used by Indians and hunters as a camping site. "Baldwin came quite early and lived peaceably among the

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰W. C. Jordan, Some Events and Incidents During the Civil War (Montgomery, 1939), p. 8.

¹¹Ibid.

Indians."¹² He adopted their customs and, like them, lived in tents. The first homesteaders were Scotch families who emigrated from South Carolina and settled the Bethel, Aberfoill, and Inverness communities.¹³ Wealthy planters settled along Chunnenuggee Ridge and north of Union Springs and established the communities of Enon, Chunnenuggee, and Guertryton.¹⁴

Union Springs was founded about 1835. M. N. Eley had for some years prior to the settlement of the Scotch located near the present site of the town. He owned most of the land where the town is and sold it to a land company that laid off a town.¹⁵ The company proposed to call the town Bienville, but the place had always been "the union springs", and Union Springs it remained. Among the early families were the Normans, Powells, Picketts, Mabsons, Sessions, Eleys, Fosters, Hunters, Stakelys, McAndrews, Farleys, Gachetts, and Fielders. There was a postoffice at Union Springs as early as May 30, 1837 with Benjamin Baldwin as postmaster, who served until September, 1839.¹⁶ For this service he received \$28.36 in pay. William Waugh was postmaster during the late 1840's and early 1850's and

¹²Bullock County Folder (Department of Archives and History)

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Mrs. T. M. Francis, Chunnenuggee Ridge (n. d.).

¹⁵Bullock County Folder (Department of Archives and History).

¹⁶Peter Brannon, "Through the Years", Montgomery Advertiser, February 27, 1938.

his salary averaged about \$12.00 per month. In 1855 he earned \$126.01, the proceeds of the office for the year accounting for \$135.57.¹⁷

Union Springs was incorporated in January, 1844. The acts of incorporation provided for an intendant and council which was empowered to "...purchase, hold, and dispose of property to the amount of \$5,000."¹⁸ The charter further states: "...the corporate limits of Union Springs shall extend one-half mile in all directions from C. Broome's hotel...."¹⁹ C. Broome, A. C. Hawkins, and William Waugh were appointed to hold an election to select seven councilors. The councilors were to have power to enact ordinances, "have conclusive control over public streets, and alleys, quell riots and disturbances," and levy taxes.²⁰ Taxes were not to exceed fifty cents on each white male over twenty-one, and twelve and one-half cents on Negroes over eighteen years of age, and ten cents on the hundred dollars for all goods and chattels. The charter further states: "...It shall not be lawful to vend any ardent spirits in

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Town Record of Union Springs, Alabama, 1844-1860, in possession of Frank W. Anderson (Union Springs, Alabama).

¹⁹Ibid. Mr. Anderson has a copy of the original charter.

²⁰Ibid.

this town under the penalty of one thousand dollars."²¹

The election of councilors was held March 10, 1844, and C. Hawkins, L. B. Coleman, J. T. Cox, Micajah Eley, Cicero Broome, and Milton Farris were elected. W. A. Waugh was selected as intendant. The first ordinances enacted by the council were to provide for a survey of the town, to declare the north and south street a public street and name it Prairie; to provide for road work, and to provide for fines!..for suffering wagons, carts, wood, carcasses and other obstructions to remain on the streets."²² The council's first business was that of working the streets of the new town, and keeping order. Obviously its citizens were not fond of street work and enjoyed fighting better. Most of the early council meetings were called to fine road defaulters and to punish persons arrested by the marshal for "rioting and fighting."²³ At one time the marshal was discharged for neglect of duty, but he could hardly be blamed, for he received the salary of only \$25.00 per year and this was rarely ever paid. The total amount of tax collected at the first assessment (1844) was \$21.70. To 1844 only one person was listed as owning more than one

²¹Ibid.

²²Ibid., March 6, 1844.

²³Ibid., November 6, 1844.

slave.²⁴ The principal duties of the town council in the early period were keeping order, issuing licenses, and keeping the streets worked. The council also attended to such duties as cleaning out the public well and building a plank fence for the graveyard.²⁵

An academy was built in 1843 and later a Mr. Butterfield opened a school for "boys and girls" on land given by the land company.²⁶

The first church in Union Springs was the Baptist Church which was organized September 8, 1849. Rev. Alfred Worthy was the first pastor of this church which had ten charter members. The Baptist church remained the only church in town for a period of ten years. The building for this church was erected in 1850, M. N. Eley having given a donation of land for that purpose. In 1859 a larger building was erected. The bell of this church was offered to the Confederacy to make cannon.²⁷ The Presbyterian Church was organized July, 1853. There were twenty-eight charter members. The first building was erected in 1858 on a lot given by Dr. Sterling Foster.²⁸ In 1857 a Methodist Sunday

²⁴Ibid. Micajah Eley owned ten slaves in 1844.

²⁵Ibid., August 24, 1849.

²⁶Alabama Conference Historical Society, The Methodist Church of Union Springs (Alabama Conference Historical Society Pamphlet, 1908).

²⁷Union Springs Herald, March 18, 1903 (hereinafter cited as Herald).

²⁸Ibid.

School was meeting in the home of R. H. Powell. This Sunday School was formed into a church in 1859 when the land company composed of R. H. Powell, S. J. Foster, and Homer Blackmon gave land for a church and parsonage. The Powell family assumed the \$1,000 debt on the building when it was finished.²⁹

The town of Union Springs grew slowly. In a letter to Miss Willie Norman, Rev. W. M. Eley wrote: "When I first knew the place in 1858, Union Springs was an unpretentious town of one hundred inhabitants or less, one or two stores, and one church."³⁰ The society of the town was never as colorful as that along Chunnenugee Ridge in ante bellum days. Much of the development of the town after the Civil War will be taken up in other chapters of this thesis.

Five miles northwest of Union Springs along that ridge which in the Creek Indian language is "Chan-ana-gi," meaning line of hills, is the site of the most cultured and colorful of the ante bellum settlements of Bullock County.³¹ Many of the old mansions are still standing while the remains of others may be seen. Chunnenugee was celebrated as a pleasant watering site and its camp meetings in the late

²⁹Alabama Conference Historical Society, op. cit.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Brannon, "Indians in Alabama," op. cit., p. 150.

summer and fall attracted people for fifty miles around.³² Wealthy planters who had settled on the rich black soils north of the ridge moved their homes to the top of the hills because the winter rains made communication virtually impossible. Among these early planters was Dr. Norborne B. Powell, formerly of Virginia, who built a magnificent mansion. Twenty slaves were required to keep house and garden in order.³³ Springs under the bluffs furnished water, primitive refrigeration, and swimming pools for the homes of the well-to-do planters.³⁴ Other planters who moved their residences to the ridge were the Carter, Cunningham, Hooten, Cary, Rutherford, Blackmon, Worthy, and Williams families. The first agricultural fair was held at Chunnenuggee and the first garden club and public garden in America were organized here in 1847.³⁵ The wealthy community supported two colleges for the education of its young women.³⁶

³²Lucy Winn, "Life on the Ridge," Montgomery Advertiser, March 17, 1929.

³³Mrs. T. M. Francis, Chunnenuggee Ridge (no date or publisher).

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Macon County Republican, April 18, 1850.

³⁶Francis, op. cit.

Indeed a culture was found here that was not surpassed anywhere in the old South. The home of Captain Richard Powell was made famous in Augusta Evans Wilson's At the Mercy of Tiberius as the site of the lightning flash that engraved Captain Powell's likeness on a pane of glass.

Farther along the Chunnenuggee Ridge is the site of old Enon. Enon was also a site of planter culture. This community received its name for its likeness to the biblical springs in Judea. The community was settled about 1840, for in that year a local citizen preached the first sermon at Enon.³⁷ Rev. John Talley in that year organized a Methodist Church in which the Peebles, Banks, White, and Pitts families were active.³⁸ A log school was built in 1840 and was used also as a church by the Baptists. The rapid development of the community is evidenced by the statement that in 1851 Enon and Chunnenuggee Methodist Churches paid \$2,975 to missions—the most in the conference.³⁹ General Peter Guerry was buried at Enon, as well as members of the Tarver, Seale, and Persons families.⁴⁰

³⁷Anson West, History of Methodism in Alabama (Nashville, 1893), pp. 414-416.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Bullock County Folder (Department of Archives and History).

Guerryton Station on the old Mobile and Girard Railroad was named for General Guerry. It was part of the Enon and Chunnenuggee communities. Theodore O'Hara, soldier, poet, and journalist, retired to his plantation near this settlement after the Civil War.

Three very old settlements were located in the northwestern part of the county. They are Mitchell, Thompson, and Fitzpatrick. Mitchell Station is named for the numerous Mitchell family and is situated between Line and Panther Creeks. This point was settled before 1820 by members of the "Line Creek Colony." Fitzpatrick was settled by a body of immigrants from Georgia. The Fitzpatrick, Baldwin, and Tompkins families settled in this area. Thompson was settled by the slave owning families of Thompson, Pickett, and Jones.⁴¹

Two of the oldest settled areas of the county are the Bethel and Aberfoil communities. Known locally as Scotland, these towns were settled by Scotch Presbyterians who sailed from the Isle of Skye in 1792 and landed in South Carolina. From there they emigrated to Alabama in 1834 arriving at their new home about Christmas. Among the pioneers were John and Nancy McKinnon who entered land from the government and built a cabin at the site of the Bristow home.⁴² Bethel Presbyterian Church was organized in 1837.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Herald, November 4, 1937. (This material was compiled from the Bethel church records by Argula Bristow. These records were sent to North Carolina in 1950).

Among the early members were John McKinnon, D. D. Campbell, Murdock McKinnon, Hector Blue, Duncan McCormick, and members of the McMillan, Cameron, McKay, McGrady, McClean, McWhorter, and McCrellis families. The first church was also used as a school. Deeds to the church property were made in Pike County in 1840.⁴³ Little is known of the Aberfoil settlement except that it was settled by the Presbyterians at the same time as Bethel. A Methodist church was formed there in 1844 with James Peeler as the first pastor.⁴⁴ The Union Springs Times and Herald, February 22, 1883, states that Aberfoil voted Whig in the election of 1840. The editor mentions having a Whig banner with log cabin made by the Whig club for use in the campaign. The Inverness community was settled by people from Bethel and Aberfoil.

Perote, formerly in Pike County, was founded in the late 1830's. This place was called Missouri Precinct because of the resemblance to the soils of that state.⁴⁵ The crossroads at Perote was called Missouri Crossroads and was the site of a tavern or inn. The earliest church was about

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴West, op. cit., p. 495.

⁴⁵Martha C. Rumph, Sketch of Perote (MS., 1896, in possession of the Rumph family, Perote, Alabama).

four miles east of these crossroads. In 1839 a log building was erected and later a bush arbor was added.⁴⁶ The rich lands of this area were largely overlooked until around 1850 when planters started building in the village of Missouri. In that year William Johnson, postmaster at Missouri, took the suggestion of a soldier returning from the Mexican War and called the little settlement Perote from the memory of that citadel silhouetted in the setting sun before General Worth's American army in 1857.⁴⁷ Mr. Johnson was the first postmaster and his first annual salary was \$12.91. The community grew rapidly after 1850 and in three years there was a fine school with over 150 pupils.⁴⁸ The school was usually taught by the minister. Among the early families were the Crossleys, Blues, Lockes, Peaches, Hixons, Culvers, Johnsons, and Rumphs. From the Methodist church on the hill the Perote Guards marched off to the Civil War and in the cemetery is a stone which reads: "J. Caddenhead—Soldier of 1776." During the 1850's Perote was a thriving community with several doctors, a Masonic Lodge, several stores, a carriage factory, and school.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ A. L. Rumph, A History of the Perote Methodist Church (Montgomery, 1908), p. 6.

⁴⁷ Martha C. Rumph, op. cit.

⁴⁸ A. L. Rumph, op. cit., p. 6.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

Like the other settlements of the county, Perote was an agricultural community and an early writer reported that clearing the heavily timbered lands caused much sickness.⁵⁰

In the western part of the county on the ridge are two old communities known as Mt. Hilliard and High Ridge. Little is known of these settlements. The church at Mt. Hilliard was founded in 1835 by the Hilliard family who, tradition says, used the original church as a school for their slaves.⁵¹ Most of the early settlers in this area came from the Edgefield district in South Carolina. Among the early immigrants were the Hilliard, Hooks, Reynolds, McCrellis, Faulkner, and Sellers families. The earliest marked grave in the Mt. Hilliard cemetery is that of Nancy Nash who died in 1844.

The old settlement around Midway has been variously called Feagin's Store and Five Points. An Act of Congress, July 7, 1838, provided that a mail route be established from Clayton by Feagin's Store to Salem in Russell County.⁵²

⁵⁰ M. C. Rumph, op. cit.

⁵¹ Interview with Mrs. Seale Hooks, Union Springs, Alabama, June 25, 1954.

⁵² Brannon, "Through the Years," Montgomery Advertiser, April 9, 1933.

Later (1842) the place was known as Five Points, Barbour County, because it was here that five public roads intersected. The name Midway was adopted because the place was about half-way between Eufaula and Tuskegee on the old stage road.⁵³ Midway was one mile below the old Five Points. A small store was built there around 1850.⁵⁴ From this modest beginning the town had grown large enough by 1855 to support four physicians, three churches, and a school taught by Simeon Doster who was "experienced in the management of large boys." The first church was established in 1852 by the Baptists and was called Five Points Baptist Church. Among the early families in this section were the Jordans, Feagins, Penicks, Thorntons, Halls, Kings, Griffins, and Olivers.⁵⁵

Two very old communities in the southern part of the county are Tanyard and Jamback. Tanyard received its name from the tanning vat and brickyard that was there in the middle of the nineteenth century. An early log school was taught there by a Mr. Phillips. There was also a church and school at Jamback. The Mains, Brabhams, Dykes, Rodgers, Baxters, Jenkins, and Stuckeys were among the first

⁵³Interview with Dr. J. M. Glenn, Midway, Alabama, June, 1954.

⁵⁴W. C. Jordan, "Midway," loc. cit.

⁵⁵Ibid.

families in this section.⁵⁶

The above-mentioned communities were the earliest known centers of settlement in Bullock County. Some of these places were incorporated later in the nineteenth century. Other communities such as Suspension, Peachburg, Thomasville, and Bughall have interesting aspects, but they were founded after the Civil War. Suspension was where the Mobile and Girard Railroad suspended operations because of lack of money to mount Chunnenuggee Ridge. Peachburg took its name from the 1,000 acres of peaches planted by Mr. Turnipseed.

A part which cannot be omitted in any local history of the South is the story of the area's participation in the Civil War. Bullock's attitude toward the war is stated by W. C. Jordan in these words: "I have a clear conscience of duty performed to my country (the Confederacy) during the war and after the war."⁵⁷ A more forceful statement is contained in the journal of Dr. J. D. Rumph, planter at Perote. Dr. Rumph wrote:

Mr. Lincoln was well known to advocate the doctrine of centralism and unionism per se, which in plain terms gave the North all the law making power and the South none. Mr. Lincoln and his cabinet are responsible for all the sufferings, cruelties, carnage, murders, and deaths of this fratricidal war; yes every drop of blood spilt, wound

⁵⁶Nell Dykes, "School Communities" (MS, Inverness High School, 1954).

⁵⁷W. C. Jordan, "Midway," (Department of Archives and History records).

received, sickness received in camp and hospitals where so many languished and died for want of freedom and food, peace and home and liberty ...for it would not have been if those in authority had only known what humanity was.⁵⁸

The county prepared for war early. The Perote Guards and Midway Guards were both organized in 1859 and had been drilling for more than a year prior to the war.⁵⁹ A southern lady wrote in 1860: "Our legislature wisely encouraged volunteer organizations—may they organize until every village has its company drilled and ready for action."⁶⁰ There were three volunteer companies organized in the county prior to the war. They were the Midway Guards, the Perote Guards, and the Alabama Rifles at Union Springs. Besides these organizations which went into regular service before the ordinances of secession were passed, many other recruits and volunteers went as individuals. Many of the members of the original companies were discharged in the early months of the war because of age or exemptions and later rejoined other regiments.

The Perote Guards were organized at Perote in 1859 and were composed mostly of students of the Perote Institute and young business men of the town. The members of this

⁵⁸ J. D. Rumph Journal (in Rumph family, Perote, Alabama).

⁵⁹ Edward Y. McMorries, History of the First Alabama Regiment (Montgomery, 1904), p. 9.

⁶⁰ Martha Crossley, Diary (MS., 1860 to 1865, in possession of the Rumph family, Perote, Alabama).

company had uniforms of gray cashmere, trimmed in blue with three rows of buttons on the fronts of the coats. They cost fifty dollars each and members paid for their own uniforms. The fatigue suit of the same company was presented by the ladies of Perote on their leaving for the war. When the Guards marched off to war they were presented with a large red, white, and blue banner emblazoned with the motto "Justice and protection for each partner or a new firm."⁶¹ In presenting the banner Miss Martha Crossley expressed the faith that "You will carry it where duty and honor lead, and you will never allow it to succumb until the last Guard is stricken to the dust."⁶² The banner was captured at Island No. Ten and was returned to the state in 1905 from Wisconsin. The Perote Guards became part of the First Alabama Regiment which was organized at Fort Barrancas, Florida, in February, 1861. George W. Dawson was elected captain of the Perote group and served until the end of 1861 when M.B. Locke was made captain. After serving at Fort Barrancas for a year, the First Alabama was sent to Island No. Ten. Here many of the Perote Guards were captured or killed. The Guards took part in the action at Fort Hudson, 1861-62, Meridian, Mobile, and the campaigns in Georgia and the

⁶¹McMorries, op. cit., pp. 9-23.

⁶²Speech of Martha Crossley, September 7, 1860 (MS., Rumph family papers, Perote, Alabama).

Carolinas. The regiment was surrendered to Sherman at Greensboro, North Carolina, April 27, 1865.⁶³ There were 197 men on the muster roll of the Perote Guards and of these McMorries states that not one deserted, put a substitute in his place, or tried to evade the service through exemption laws.⁶⁴

The Midway Guards were organized at Midway in 1860 with nice uniforms and army guns.⁶⁵ J. W. L. Daniel was captain and W. B. Bowen was lieutenant of this company when it was mustered into service at Fort Mitchell in June, 1861, as Company B, of the Fifteenth Alabama Regiment. The Midway Guards saw action in the fights at Cold Harbor, Fredericksburg, Harper's Ferry, fought under Longstreet at Gettysburg, and took part in the Wilderness Campaign before it surrendered in Virginia.⁶⁶

Company C, Forty-fifth Alabama Regiment was formed by men of Midway, Enon, and Guerryton in 1861 with G. M. Carter, a Methodist preacher, as captain and was known as the Carter Guards. This company served in the Western Army under Bragg and Joseph E. Johnston and saw service in practically

⁶³McMorries, op. cit., p. 33.

⁶⁴Ibid., pp. 34-94.

⁶⁵W. C. Jordan, Events and Incidents of the Civil War, p. 14.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 48.

every state.⁶⁷ Of the 125 members of this company, 24 were killed, 58 died in service, and 29 were wounded. Half of the members were under eighteen and forty were under seventeen years of age.⁶⁸

Company E of the Twenty-third Alabama Battalion of Sharpshooters was composed of 125 men from Bullock with J. W. L. Daniel of Midway as captain. It saw service at Chattanooga, Chicamauga, Knoxville, and the Wilderness.⁶⁹

Company E of the Forty-fifth Alabama, the Macon County Rebels, was made up principally of men from Aberfoil and Ridgely communities. This company numbered about one hundred men and fought under Joseph E. Johnston.

Company L, Fifteenth Alabama Regiment, was raised by Dr. Robert Hill mostly at and around Perote in the spring of 1862. There were about 130 enlisted men in this company which saw service at Sharpsburg, Cold Harbor, and Gettysburg. A great number of this company died from disease, and Captain Hill was killed in the first engagement at Cross Keys.⁷⁰

The Alabama Rifles of Union Springs became Company B of the Twenty-third Alabama Regiment. The company was mustered into service in October, 1861 and surrendered at

⁶⁷ Interview with Dr. J. M. Glenn, Midway, Alabama, 1954.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Herald, September 28, 1904.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

Saulsberry, North Carolina in April, 1865. Frank McMurray was captain of this company which numbered 130 officers and men.⁷¹

Company B, Fifty-first Alabama Cavalry, was principally composed of men from Bullock County. This group numbered about 135 officers and men and was commanded by Captain R. B. Johnson. The company surrendered at Greensborough, North Carolina in May, 1865.⁷²

Another company of men was made up from the Mt. Hilliard section by Captain John McCrellis. This company belonged to Hilliard's Legion and later to the Sixtieth Alabama.⁷³

Bullock County, no action taking place on its soil, experienced the usual privations of the war. From the beginning her soldiers had the militant backing of the women and as more and more men left for service the women assumed the responsibilities they left behind them. Hands that had never touched the loom spun cloth and made clothing for the soldiers. One writer of the period states: "I am spinning today...Our ladies will enjoy better health to manufacture their own cloth...thereby manifesting our independence of the Yankees...."⁷⁴ Overseeing the Negroes was a major

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³Ibid.

⁷⁴Martha Crossley Diary, 1863.

problem for the women whose men had all gone to war and left the job of managing large plantations. Martha Crossley wrote:

I am troubled to know what to do with my negroes another year. I do not wish them out of my family, for fear they may be badly treated and form bad habits, but it seems it is not to the interest of any of my brothers to take them.⁷⁵

Young ladies spent their time making articles to send to the camps and each town supplied its local men with many necessary articles. Captain McMurray of the Alabama Rifles in a letter of 1861 expressed appreciation for a big box of blankets, clothing, hospital stores and other articles from "The Ladies Soldiers Aid Society" at Union Springs.⁷⁶ At Perote on August 8, 1863, Martha Crossley wrote: "Very busy. Have two caps to finish, a glove to knit, three comforters to fringe and dye by tomorrow morning so that Mr. Locke may carry them to our soldier friends."⁷⁷

Letters from Bullock County men in the Confederate service show a very great need for these and other necessary articles as well as money.⁷⁸ An example of the sacrifice of the women is shown from this entry in a contemporary diary:

⁷⁵Ibid.

⁷⁶Letter of Captain Frank McMurray to Union Springs Herald and Times (n.d.).

⁷⁷Martha Crossley Diary (Rumph family, Perote, Alabama).

⁷⁸Diary of Francis Chase, 1863 (Rumph family papers, Perote, Alabama).

I am going to cut my nubia into three comforters and give them to the soldiers. I can knit another or do without, it doesn't matter so some poor soldier who is fighting for me is made comfortable.⁷⁹

Soldiers returning on furlough or recovering from wounds or illness were lavishly feted in some communities.

At Perote a social entertainment was given in the Institute in honor of any man of the Perote Guards who returned home.⁸⁰

As the war drew toward its close with the mounting casualties and increasing sacrifice at home, the once indomitable spirit of the Bullock County women began to fail. It was apparent that the ladies were becoming despondent of the ultimate success of the war. McMorries reported that the ladies of Perote who from start to finish had been the spirit of the war seemed to be yielding to doubts and despondency.⁸¹ A glorious chapter of Bullock's history was closing and in a few months the darkness of reconstruction had spread over the land.

The county's only contact with the real war came at the close when detachments of Wilson's Raiders moved along the Ridge road from Montgomery to Union Springs. The main column of these raiders entered the county near High Ridge and Mt. Hilliard and moved up the ridge followed by hundreds of

⁷⁹Martha Crossley Diary.

⁸⁰McMorries, op. cit., p. 113.

⁸¹Ibid.

runaway slaves and mules, horses, and wagons loaded with spoils.⁸² The main body of the invaders halted at Union Springs to send out groups to steal horses, corn, silver, and other valuables. At Post Oak Captain C. Pennington gathered up a squad of boys and old men and captured a party of the marauders. Six miles west of Perote the raiders looted the Parker plantation and threatened the lives of Miss Josephine Parker and her sister who were alone, the Negroes having run off. Miss Parker put up such a spirited defense that the Yankees departed saying "No use to kill that crazy woman—she as soon die as not."⁸³ The county faced the task of rebuilding its farms and homes, and of mending the broken spirits and bodies of its men.

⁸²E. Y. McMorries, "Yankee Ruffians" (MS., Department of Archives and History, Montgomery).

⁸³Ibid.

CHAPTER III

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

After the Civil War, the territory which became Bullock County was in a deplorable state economically. The planter system was disrupted, labor supply a matter of conjecture, fences were down and farms neglected, houses sadly in need of repair, and roads were often impassible.¹ The bad condition of the roads was a major reason why the people of this section demanded the creation of a new county. During the winter months and rainy season, the people were isolated from the county seats of the counties in which they lived. Those citizens in the northern section found it almost impossible to get to Tuskegee in Macon County because of the character of the prairie soil. A horse could hardly negotiate it alone in wet weather, much less pull a wagon or buggy over the roads. The roads to Clayton in Barbour and Troy in Pike County were little better. During the War these roads had been neglected, bridges were washed away and decayed, holes were not filled, and ditches were not opened.²

The most important and best known road in the county was the trail blazed in 1824 across the county and known as

¹Union Springs Times, February to December, 1866 (hereinafter cited as Times).

²C. E. McNair, "Reconstruction in Bullock County," Alabama Historical Quarterly, Spring, 1953, p. 81.

the Three Notch Road.³ Down this trail came immigrants from Georgia and the Carolinas, peddlers, tramps, and perhaps the first stage coach. In 1834 the Bethel road was cut out by the Scotch settlers to serve the several communities settled by them. The stage road leading south from Union Springs crossed this road at Perote. Five Points, near present Midway, was the intersection of roads leading to Columbus, Tuskegee, Montgomery, Clayton, and Eufaula. Some of these roads were established as early as 1842. Samuel Frazer had a store at Five Points on the stage road about that time.⁴ Along the other roads were inns or taverns such as the ones at Blue's Old Stand on the Three Notch road and at Perote. Many travelers expected to find accommodation in homes along their way. Travelers were usually welcomed for they brought news and were a prime source of entertainment. At Chunnenugee the home of Norborne Powell was a stopping place for the stage coaches and travelers were entertained in fine style. One writer of the period who lived at a cross roads on the Union Springs, Tuskegee road speaks of the horse and hog drovers who passed that way.⁵ Many movers going west would stop at the crossroads houses and stores for what supplies they could get.

³See above, Chapter II.

⁴W. C. Jordan, "Midway," (Department of Archives and History.

⁵Ibid.

It is not surprising that road repair was one of the first acts of the county government. At the first meeting of the county commissioners held February 11, 1867, a chain gang was set up to labor on public works, and Martin Griswold was appointed superintendent of works and public roads.⁶ Overseers were appointed for each beat at this first meeting. It is interesting to note the early records of road work in the county. In May, 1867, several new roads were ordered, among them being one from Blue's Old Stand to the Indian Creek post office. On May 15, 1867, the county commissioners were ordered to let contracts for building and repairing bridges in Greenwood Beat "as is consistent with the financial condition of the county." In November, 1867, the court reported \$1,187 spent for building bridges across Conecuh River.⁷ Earlier in the year the county had received authority from the legislature to issue \$20,000 in notes for the purpose of building bridges, a courthouse, and jail.⁸

The first roads were about fifteen or twenty feet wide, which was fairly adequate for horse and buggy days. The construction and maintenance of roads was a task that was

⁶Minutes of County Commissioners Court, Bullock County, Alabama (Judge of Probate Office, Union Springs, Alabama), I, p. 1.

⁷Ibid., p. 25.

⁸Acts of Alabama, 1866-1867, p. 642.

never ended. Winter rains and spring and summer floods made almost constant work necessary. There was no road department to care for public highways and the condition of roads varied from locality to locality. Road maintenance was purely a local affair. The county was divided into several districts and each district elected a road overseer whose duty was to see that the roads of his district were worked at least once a year. The working was usually done during the summer soon after the crops were laid by. Sometimes the working lasted a week or two, but more often it was a task that was hurriedly completed. The overseer would warn every man between the ages of eighteen and forty-five to appear on a given day to begin work. Work was done mostly by hand and those who could afford it hired workers in their places.⁹ In towns such as Union Springs and Perote a street tax of three dollars was levied for maintenance of the streets. Road working was a duty evaded as often as possible by many. Fines were levied in the town for default of road duty.¹⁰

The county could afford little equipment and most workers supplied their own. Pick, shovel, and hoe were often all the equipment available. Sometimes a mule drawn drag

⁹Minutes of County Commissioners Court, loc. cit., pp. 25-50.

¹⁰Town Records of Union Springs, 1845-1850, loc. cit.

was used if money was available to rent one. In 1868 the commissioners court authorized the purchase of shovels, picks, and hoes, so that the "prisoners in the county jail may work on the county roads."¹¹ Later even this small help was taken away as the county leased its convicts to the Pratt Mines and Comer farms.

Prior to 1900 the roads in the county were never in very good condition nor were the people ever satisfied with them. Reports and correspondence in the local papers show much dissatisfaction with the road overseers. In September, 1887, a correspondent from Perote wrote of the bad conditions of the roads and bridges and demanded that the overseers attend to their duty.¹² This writer further complained that the local overseer had removed the planking on the Double Creek bridges for his own use. The Herald, June 6, 1888, called for a change in the road working set-up. The editor reported that in many places Negro overseers did not know how to care for the roads and that the whites under them would not work. The grand jury, August, 1894, reported the roads in "tolerably" good condition, but even this description was taken issue with immediately by the editor of the Herald. The editor complained of the bad roads and remarked that the overseers did not force

¹¹Minutes of Commissioners Court, I, loc. cit., p. 71.

¹²Herald, September 21, 1887.

road work for fear of making enemies.¹³ In the same issue a letter signed "Farmer" said that the roads of his district were impassable because the workers had left the middle of the road lower than the outside; a condition that caused water to stand. It was reported that not more than two hundred pounds per wagon could be moved in winter between Union Springs and Perote because of the deep mud. Roads in the prairie soil were even worse. Bridges were in no better shape and were often washed away.¹⁴

The inadequacy of the county equipment is shown by the provisions of a local bill passed by the legislature in 1886. This act provided that overseers might procure tools other than ordinary farm tools in exchange for labor on roads. This same act also empowered overseers to hire a wagon and team for road work providing the cost was not over two dollars per day. This use of wagon and team was further restricted to not more than four days per year in any district.¹⁵

At the continued insistence of the voters of the county and of the merchants of Union Springs an "Act for the Improvement of Public Roads in Bullock County" was passed by the legislature in 1895. This Act instructed the county commissioners to purchase stock and equipment necessary to

¹³Ibid., September 19, 1894.

¹⁴Ibid., August 10, 1887.

¹⁵Acts of Alabama, 1888-1889, p. 396.

work the roads at a cost not to exceed \$1,500, and to spend an additional \$2,500 on improvements. An important provision of this act was the creation of a general road superintendent who would give bond to discharge all duties. The superintendent was responsible for calling out men subject for road work and seeing that each did his proper share of the work. In addition to this labor the superintendent was authorized to employ as many as twelve laborers to be paid by the county.¹⁶

While by the turn of the century some progress had been made, it was still many years before the county was literally "out of the mud."

The railways of Bullock, as with all other counties, blazed the trail for the development of land transportation. The people of the county were highly enthusiastic over the building of the first railroad through the county and this enthusiasm continued during the three decades after the war. The first railroad to reach the county was the Mobile and Girard which began grading a right-of-way in 1852. By 1858 the track had been laid as far as Chunnenugee Ridge north of Union Springs, but operations were held up there for two years until the company could raise enough money to cut the grade. The place where the road stopped has ever since been called "Suspension." The track reached Union Springs in 1860 and was pushed on to

¹⁶Acts of Alabama, 1894-1895, p. 292.

Inverness before the outbreak of the war. During the war some of the track was torn up and the iron rails turned over to the Confederate government.¹⁷ The company had been granted alternate sections of land along its Bullock County right-of-way and many of its bonds had been sold to citizens of the county. When the track reached Union Springs the citizens presented Arnold Seale, the contractor, with a silver pitcher engraved with a locomotive as a token of their gratitude for his successful completion of the Mobile and Girard to Union Springs. Work was renewed on the road after the war and in 1869 it had reached Troy. Stations were soon established at Suspension, Chunnenugee, Union Springs, Boswell, and Inverness. Charles Franklin of Union Springs was one of the first directors of the Mobile and Girard. In 1896 the road was purchased by the Central of Georgia system.¹⁸

The Montgomery and Eufaula Railroad, which had been planned during the war, was the second road to be constructed in the county. The right-of-way had been graded but no track had been laid. In 1870 the track had been laid to a point six miles from Union Springs and passengers and mail were carried from there to town.¹⁹ In order to secure this railroad the city of Union Springs had subscribed

¹⁷Herald, 1908, (n. d.).

¹⁸Brannon, "Through the Years," Montgomery Advertiser, May 26, 1938.

¹⁹Union Springs Herald and Times, July 11, 1870 (Hereinafter cited as Herald and Times).

\$25,000 worth of stock of the road, issuing bonds on the city to pay for it. In 1879 the bonds were unpaid and the city had failed to receive the stock of the company to back them up. The council was forced to reissue the bonds at fifty cents on the dollar and complained "it is a gloomy outlook on our town on account of the murderous discrimination of our railroads."²⁰

During the period 1880 to 1895 at least four railroads were projected by local businessmen of the county. One of these projects was chartered in 1889—the proposed Union Springs and Pensacola Railroad. S. J. Foster, B. T. Eley, William Stakeley, S. T. Frazer, and Lewie Sessions were listed as incorporators of the road which was to have a capital stock of \$1,000,000. The charter gave the directors two years to construct the first twenty miles of track, and while this time was later extended to four years, the road was never built.²¹

Another proposed railroad was the Union Springs, Birmingham, and Bainbridge road. A third road was proposed to Chattanooga, and J. L. Roberts of the Bullock County Land Company offered to give the right-of-way and grounds for depots through the county.²² A great deal of interest

²⁰Records of Union Springs Town Council, July 7, 1879.

²¹Acts of Alabama, 1888-1889, p. 1016.

²²Bullock County Reporter, February 8, 1889 (Hereinafter cited as Reporter).

and enthusiasm was generated by these proposed projects. The local papers supported the railroads wholeheartedly. The Reporter stated that the Union Springs, and Pensacola Railroad would increase the population of Union Springs by 2,000 and would aid in securing factories for the town.²³ A desire for cheaper rates and direct sales with the north and west were two of the main reasons for building new railroads in the county.²⁴

The entire county was opposed to increasing the powers of the state railroad commission. In a petition to the state legislature signed by ninety per cent of the business firms in Union Springs and by many planters, the signers opposed "all legislation calculated to disturb the friendly relations between the railroads and the people of Alabama."²⁵ Similar petitions were sent to the representatives of the county from nearly every community in the county. The Herald was opposed to the railroad commission and printed two petitions opposing it signed by more than two hundred people.²⁶

Relations between the county and the railroads were not always friendly. The Mobile and Girard Railroad had long discriminated against the county in the matter of

²³Ibid., February 13, 1889.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Herald, December 10, 1884.

²⁶Ibid.

rates. Rates were higher from Union Springs to Columbus and other points than they were from Troy and other southern towns to Columbus. Freight on cotton shipped to Columbus was two dollars per bale in 1880. The use of local and imported colored labor caused bad feeling toward the railroad from whites who needed jobs and from planters who found black labor scarce.²⁷

Railroad construction in the county proved too great a venture for local investors and efforts to attract foreign capital were also unsuccessful. None of the proposed roads ever reached the construction stage and the Mobile and Girard and Montgomery and Eufaula lines remained the only links of rail transportation until the second decade of the twentieth century.

The first telephone was installed in the county in 1889. It was a private line built between Paulk's drug-store and the depot in Union Springs. The line was built for subscribers only and the Herald asked others not to use the line. Explicit directions for operating the phones were given in the paper when they were installed. L. W. Jinks, W. E. Pierce, and J. H. Rainer were among the first subscribers. A local system was set up in Union Springs by S. Wilson in 1894. This system was later sold to S. V. T. Chambless who operated it for about fifteen years and it formed the basis for the telephone company set up

²⁷Census of 1880, I, p. 129.

and operated by Hugh Foster and T. E. Bell. A long distance connection with the Bell system was established in 1900.²⁸

Mail services in Bullock county prior to the rural free delivery which was established in 1904 were largely unsatisfactory and uncertain. The earliest mail was carried on the stage coaches over the principal routes of the county. After the Civil War, mail routes were established between the various county postoffices of the county and some town or railroad station. In most cases mail was sent out to the country from Union Springs.

Agriculture in Bullock County from the earliest days has been largely devoted to cotton production. An overdependence on this crop caused the county much suffering in the two decades before 1900 as it did in nearly all southern counties. Little improvement of farming methods was noted, nor was there much interest in a more diversified agriculture until the Grange and Farmers Alliance movements swept the South in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

The early settlers of the county were nearly all farmers who were perhaps as good as any in the South. The absence of large tracts of open prairie land was less attractive to the planter class, consequently many of the first settlers cleared and worked their own plantations

²⁸Herald, February 27, 1889.

and farms. The areas north of Chunnenugee Ridge saw the development of many large plantations. Planter communities were found at Chunnenugee, Enon, and Fitzpatrick. Several large plantations were located near Perote. Many of the farmers worked their land side by side with their slaves.²⁹

At the end of the Civil War the economic system of the county was unstable and the labor supply was a matter of conjecture, as it was highly uncertain what the Negroes would do.³⁰ Many farms had been neglected and dwelling houses and out-houses were sadly in need of repair. Dilapidated fences offered scant barriers to the few cattle which had survived the war years. Planters hesitated to plant large cotton crops, not having the assurance of a sufficient labor supply.³¹ In spite of misgivings, however, the people turned their attention to the next year's crop. The Negroes were apparently ready to work, and the Times reported that they seemed to work as well free as slave.³² The local paper in an editorial urged farmers not to quit cotton as their main crop.³³ By 1867

²⁹W. C. Jordan, Events and Incidents of the Civil War, p. 9.

³⁰Times, September 5, 1866.

³¹Ibid., August 22, 1866.

³²Ibid., December 6, 1866.

³³Ibid.

some recovery from the ravages of the war had been made. The Times of March 6, 1867 reported that the plantations were recuperating from the war, cabins had new roofs, and there was an air of thrift and comfort everywhere. Repaired fences, reclaimed ditches, and plowed fields gave evidence of a restored agricultural prosperity. The editor of the Times was gratified to find a considerable growth of corn on many farms and advised farmers to plant more and more of this crop.³⁴ The editor lamented the fact that the majority of the planters would raise no feed or feed crops. A wagon load of corn in the shuck passing through Union Springs in May, 1867, created quite a sensation. "All honor to the man who has not bowed to King Cotton," said editor Drake of the Times.³⁵ Cotton remained the main source of income for the farmers of the county and the local paper later predicted that the "railroads will make this a large cotton marketing center."³⁶

There was much talk to the effect that the merchants of Union Springs had too much goods on hand during 1867 and a local statistician summarizing the situation came to the conclusion that stocks should be reduced. He said that in the county there were 8,000 hands engaged in the business

³⁴Ibid., March 6, 1867.

³⁵Times, May 29, 1866.

³⁶Ibid., August 22, 1866.

of producing cotton. They would produce around 24,000 bales worth ten cents per pound, totaling \$1,200,000. He estimated that 6,000 of the producing force were Negroes who would earn about \$50 each and 2,000 were whites who would earn \$300 each. All of this would be spent in the county, leaving a balance of \$300,000 to be applied on the debts of the previous year. The mercantile investment in goods was \$450,000. The local economist advocated a reduction in stocks and a reduction in credit. His conclusion was that cash customers were tired of paying a bonus of twenty per cent to allow credit customers to run.³⁷

The extensive stock of goods seems pretentious for merchants in a town of scarcely more than a thousand inhabitants, especially when many families were having biscuits only once a week. Some families were using spinning wheel, card, and loom and producing by hand both cotton and woolen cloth. Because of the economic depression of 1868 many people found it necessary to depend on their own efforts for articles which were usually bought at the store. The Times complimented Mrs. Stinson, a woman of sixty-five, for spinning fourteen cuts of thread in one day and on another weaving eight yards of plain cotton cloth.³⁸ In another issue James Rogers of Hardaway advertised 2,000

³⁷Ibid., October 19, 1867.

³⁸Ibid., October 21, 1868.

gallons of homemade grape wine for sale and this beverage was advertised for "invalids, females, and children."³⁹

The years immediately after the war were hard ones as indicated by the large amounts of land sold for taxes, and some issues of the Times were given over largely to advertisements of lands to be sold for taxes. In March, 1870, seventy thousand acres of land were advertised for sale because of unpaid taxes.⁴⁰

For the purpose of organization and the discussion of their problems a group of cotton planters met at Chunnenuggee in September, 1868. They wanted a better price for their cotton and came to the following conclusions: The planters must organize themselves and work together at all times; they must avoid forcing cotton on a declining market; and they must provide storage for cotton which was to be held off the market.⁴¹ This meeting was the stimulus for the Bullock County Agricultural Society which was organized in March, 1869, with J. L. Moultrie as president. This was the first of many farmers' organizations organized in the county prior to and during the Alliance movement.

³⁹Ibid., November 4, 1868.

⁴⁰Ibid., March 29, 1870.

⁴¹Ibid., March 24, 1869.

There was much complaint that King Cotton was threatening to become as tyrannical as Radicalism in the affairs of the county.⁴² William Stakeley, in a report made in July, 1872, stated that there had been received in Union Springs from January to July of 1872, 250 cars of corn, 487 casks of bacon, 70,000 bushels of corn, and 50,000 pounds of bacon. It was pointed out that the money paid for this could have been kept in the county if farmers would only raise something besides cotton. Three-fourths of this corn and bacon was sold on credit, thus raising prices by as much as fifty per cent and placing a burden on the farmers of \$140,000 in the form of mortgages on land and liens on livestock and crops.⁴³ In this year cotton sold for sixteen cents per pound, corn for \$1.65 per bushel, while lard cost 25 cents and bacon 35 cents per pound.

Added to these troubles, the cotton rust and cotton caterpillars ruined the crops for several years during the 1870's. In 1870 the county produced 17,972 bales of cotton, but the crops of 1872 and 1873 were the shortest in memory. The local papers reflect the problems of the farmer during this time and indicate the dependence of the county on agriculture and cotton. The Times and Herald called on

⁴² McNair, op. cit., p. 114.

⁴³ Herald and Times, July 17, 1872.

the government to find some way to "enhance the value of cotton and to ameliorate our political condition."⁴⁴ It urged the farmers of the county to form agricultural organizations and unite for their protection. In another issue, protesting the high prices paid for northern goods, the editor called on the farmers of Bullock County to form a Grange.⁴⁵

While some improvement was noted during the latter years of the seventies, by 1880 the conditions of Bullock farmers were gradually worsening. The Herald reported in 1880 that "this section is in the worst financial shape since 1873."⁴⁶ Farmers had been unable for two years to meet their obligations because of short crops and low prices. Many of the merchants were unable to collect because of crooked ways to avoid payment of debts.⁴⁷ In 1881 the farming outlook was even worse than in the previous years.⁴⁸ The labor supply was scarce and the Negroes

⁴⁴Ibid., May 7, 1873.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Herald, November 17, 1880.

⁴⁷Ibid. Many ran larger farms than they were capable of handling, thus incurring larger debts.

⁴⁸Ibid., April 2, 1881.

"seemed sullen and out of heart."⁴⁹ A great many Negroes and small farmers who had been renters in former years were compelled to hire out or become sharecroppers.⁵⁰

In 1880 the county produced 22,597 bales of cotton on 80,470 acres, the yield being a little less than the state average of one-third bale per acre.⁵¹ The same year 380,000 bushels of corn were made on 481,000 acres, the acreage in corn being about one-half that planted in cotton. The next largest crop was oats of which there were 6,177 bushels harvested.⁵² Cotton was selling for eleven cents per pound in 1882, while corn sold for \$1.25 a bushel.⁵³ Union Springs merchants advertised coffee for fifteen cents per pound, bacon at fifteen cents, sugar at twelve cents and flour at eight dollars per barrel.⁵⁴

By 1893 the county again found itself in the throes of depression. Said the Herald: "The hard times has its effects on everything, not only business feels it, but society as well."⁵⁵ Short crops and low prices of 1893

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹United States Census of 1880, III, Statistics of Agriculture (Washington, 1883), p. 213.

⁵²Ibid., p. 178.

⁵³Herald, August 9, 1882.

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵Ibid., November 1, 1893.

caused a great deal of suffering as a correspondent to the local paper begged "give us ten cents for our cotton."⁵⁶ Farmers refused to sell their cotton and the Herald reported that "it is impossible to get the cotton out of the streets as the warehouses are full and the price is too low for it to be sold."⁵⁷

The production of corn in the county as a cash crop and for feed was continually urged by agricultural leaders and the farm societies. An increase in corn production was noted in the decades of the 1880's and 1890's which would indicate some success of the Grange and Alliance programs. In 1890 the corn production was 563,000 bushels on 51,708 acres while in 1900 the production had risen to 628,000 bushels on 68,330 acres, and increase in yield per acre as well as in acres planted. Hog production was 20,000 in 1880, 22,000 in 1890, and 26,000 in 1900, which would suggest that Bullock farmers were growing more corn for feed than for sale.⁵⁸ Peanuts were introduced into the county by John T. Smith in 1883, but only 900 acres, producing 7,000 bushels, were planted in 1900.⁵⁹

⁵⁶

Ibid., November 29, 1893.

⁵⁷

Ibid.

⁵⁸

United States Census of 1880, III, p. 178; United States Census of 1890, I, p. 516; United States Census of 1900, VI, p. 153.

⁵⁹

Herald, October 3, 1883.

Cotton remained the principal money crop in Bullock County despite the efforts of the agricultural reformers. Production of cotton showed a steady increase until well into the twentieth century. In 1870 the county marketed 17,972 bales; in 1880, 22,578 bales; in 1890 30,547 bales; and in 1900, 33,161 bales.⁶⁰ Acreage in cotton increased from 80,470 acres in 1880 to 103,537 acres by 1900, with 108,000 acres planted in 1910.⁶¹ The yield per acres of cotton showed little change from 1870 to 1900 even though the amount of money spent for fertilizer in that period increased by eight times.⁶²

Other crops raised in the county were sweet potatoes, sugar cane, wheat, rye, peanuts, and rice. These were all raised for home consumption: potatoes and syrup being a main part of every family's staple diet.⁶³

The production of fruits for commercial use was attempted several times but the efforts were never very successful. Dr. C. H. Franklin organized a fruit growers association in 1883 to encourage the growing of watermelons, strawberries, and vegetables for the market.⁶⁴ His efforts were not successful however, even though he guaranteed

⁶⁰United States Census of 1900, VI, p. 430.

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²United States Census of 1900, V, p. 266.

⁶³Ibid., VI, pp. 481, 4701.

⁶⁴Herald, June 6, 1883. The value of fruits in 1889 was \$180.

shipping facilities for those who wished to sell. No real effort to raise fruit commercially was made until A. S. Turnipseed planted the peach orchards at Peachburg around 1900.⁶⁵

Census records indicate that the cattle industry was never very important to the economy of Bullock County. In 1870 there were 3,179 cattle with an assessed valuation of \$26,000.⁶⁶ In 1890 there were 13,104 cattle of which 1,268 were sold. This number had decreased to 12,000 by 1900 and the total value of all animals sold that year was \$37,000. The number of swine increased in number from 9,000 in 1870 to 25,659 in 1900.⁶⁷ The value of all animals slaughtered in 1900 was \$89,000.⁶⁸ Even though cattle and hogs produced little in cash compared with other farm industries, they were grown for home consumption and the farmer was not forced to buy high priced western meats.

The status of agriculture as a whole in the county may be shown by comparing the number of farms and value of farm products. In 1880 there were 3,066 farms in the county with a total value of \$1,625,000.⁶⁹ By 1890 the number of

⁶⁵ This notable effort failed after a few years.

⁶⁶ Alabama State Documents (Montgomery, 1871), p. 63.

⁶⁷ United States Census of 1890, I, p. 318; United States Census of 1900, V, p. 417.

⁶⁸ Ibid. In 1880 two-thirds of the hogs were consumed at home.

⁶⁹ United States Census of 1880, III, pp. 30, 104.

farms was 3,106, but the value had decreased to \$1,104,446.⁷⁰ In 1900 the number of farms had risen to 5,005 with a value of \$2,604,619.⁷¹ The values of all farm products in 1880 was \$1,450,436, compared to \$1,794,000 in 1890 and \$1,885,305 in 1900.⁷² Thus as the number of farms doubled, the amount of income per individual on farms showed a marked decrease.

In 1880 the average farm size in Bullock County was 106 acres with one-half of the total farms containing less than 50 acres.⁷³ In 1890, of a total of 3,106 farms, 1,717 were less than 50 acres, and 2,367 less than 100 acres.⁷⁴ In 1900 there were 5,005 farms and of these more than one-half, 2,660, contained less than 50 acres, while 4,069 contained less than 100 acres with the average size 68 acres.⁷⁵ Thus it appears that while the value per farm remained about the same, the value of farm products did not increase as the number of farms increased in the county and that there was an increase in small farms.

At the end of the Civil War there were some 8,000 Negroes engaged in the business of producing cotton in

⁷⁰United States Census of 1890, I, p. 198.

⁷¹United States Census of 1900, V, pp. 58-59.

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³United States Census of 1880, III, p. 30.

⁷⁴United States Census of 1890, I, pp. 120-121.

⁷⁵United States Census of 1900, pp. 58-59.

Bullock County.⁷⁶ Many of these workers remained on their old plantations where they began working land allotted them on shares with their former masters. White farmers who did not own land could generally rent it for cash or for crop rent. During the hard times of the 1870's and 1880's practically all the Negro farmers and many of the white farmers were forced into sharecropping.⁷⁷ In 1880 fifty-four per cent of the farms were run by sharecroppers, twenty-four per cent for cash run, and twenty-two per cent were farmed by the owners. There were twice as many twenty to fifty acre farms run on shares or rented for cash rent as farms of all other sizes.⁷⁸ After 1880 the number of sharecroppers had decreased, while the number who rented on a cash basis increased. By 1890 the number of cash renters and sharecroppers were equal, with both groups farming thirty-nine per cent of the land.⁷⁹ In 1900 sixty per cent were farming on a cash rent basis with only twenty-four per cent remaining as sharecroppers.⁸⁰ However, the number of owners had dropped by more than one-half, to

⁷⁶ McNair, op. cit., p. 97.

⁷⁷ Herald, April 2, 1887.

⁷⁸ United States Census of 1880, III, p. 104.

⁷⁹ United States Census of 1890, I, pp. 120-121.

⁸⁰ United States Census of 1900, V, pp. 58-59.

comprise only ten per cent of the total number of farmers.⁸¹ This drop in number in the face of a double number of farms indicates that there were very few who were able to buy their own lands during these years and that some who owned farms must have lost them.⁸² Of all the farmers in Bullock County in 1900, eighty-one per cent were Negro, and nineteen per cent were white. Of the 963 white farmers, 779 owned their farms, while of the 4,042 Negroes only 122 owned their land.⁸³

During the years 1880 to 1889, 423,255 acres of Bullock farm lands were mortgaged for a total debt of \$1,650,347.⁸⁴ The greatest number of acres mortgaged in a single year was in 1887 when 63,011 acres were encumbered with an average debt of \$2.90 per acre. The average value of this land was \$5.08 which compared well with the average state value of \$5.59 per acre.⁸⁵

During the early 1870's the status of the farmer in Bullock County is shown by the number of editorials in the local papers protesting the fate of the farmer and calling on the farmers to unite for their own protection. Bullock County, like other southern counties, was suffering

⁸¹Ibid.

⁸²In 1880, 681 owned farms; in 1900, 501.

⁸³United States Census of 1900, V, pp. 58-59.

⁸⁴United States Census of 1890, XVII, p. 324.

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 325.

from the high cost of manufactured goods and excessive transportation costs.

The farmers of the county joined enthusiastically in the Granger movement. In August, 1874, Grange No. 19 was organized at Union Springs and charter members were given the benefit of cheaper initiation fees. Men who joined at once paid three dollars as an initiation fee and ladies were admitted for fifty cents.⁸⁶ J. R. Rogers was the first master of the Grange at Union Springs. Chapters were rapidly formed in the other communities of the county and efforts were made to improve the status of the farmers. There were Grange units at various places in the county in 1873. The annual report of the Grange of 1875 lists dues collected from Granges at Midway, Perote, Mt. Hilliard, and Bethel.⁸⁷ 1874 was the most prosperous of the three years reported so far as dues collected were concerned. For 1875 every Grange in the county reported a large reduction in dues paid to the state convention which would indicate that membership had dropped considerably.⁸⁸ Delegates from the county in 1875 were I. F. Culver, C. H. Laney, N. A. Matheson, and R. H. Powell, all of whom were prominent in agriculture and politics in the county and who later

⁸⁶ McNair, op. cit., p. 122.

⁸⁷ Journal of Proceedings of the 3rd Annual Session of the Alabama State Grange (Montgomery, 1875), p. 52.

⁸⁸ Ibid. Midway reported \$26.85 in 1874; \$4.50 in 1875.

became leaders in the Alliance movements.

At this time there was much talk of diversification of farming and especially of raising food and feed at home. Many farmers were soon producing enough corn to meet their needs without buying extra from the West.⁸⁹

Wheat, oats, sugar cane, and potatoes were raised in increasing quantities. A high percentage of land given to the cultivation of corn, oats, peas, millet, chufas, sorghum, and other grain suggest that the old agricultural order was at last making some change.⁹⁰ These crops indicate an increased production of hogs and cattle which was part of the Grange program. Indeed, a comparison of the census figures of 1870 and 1880 show a sizable increase in the number of cattle.⁹¹

A Grange warehouse was organized in Union Springs but was doomed to failure by the opposition of the merchants in the town. The Grange tried to retaliate by asking its members not to trade with merchants who opposed the warehouse. This did little good and caused much hard feeling which destroyed the usefulness of the organization.⁹²

⁸⁹McNair, op. cit., p. 122.

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 123. Twenty-eight per cent of the land in Perote heat was given to cotton production.

⁹¹United States Census of 1880, III, p. 142.

⁹²McNair, op. cit., p. 123.

There could be no effective boycott against the merchants because of the crop lien law. The farmer had to buy his goods from the merchant who furnished him and could not change trading places even though he might desire to do so.

During the fall of 1876 the Grange held a county fair at Union Springs at which were displayed many agricultural products, articles of home manufacture, and items of artistic nature. In the household department were displayed quilts, counterpanes, fancy needlework, pickles, preserves, breads, cakes, pies, and many other products of the farm home. There were four breeds of hogs, two of sheep, and two of cattle. There were twenty colts of fine blood including some racing stock that were raised in the county. This was the first county fair to be held in Bullock County and its sponsors hoped to make it an annual event.⁹³

The Granges did what they could to better conditions for the farmers but interest soon lagged and they were not able to accomplish much in Bullock County except to pave the way for participation in the farmers' movements that swept the county in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. After 1875 interest in the Granger movement gradually died, but various Granger units functioned until 1879. A meeting held at Aberfoyl, with I. F. Culver as

⁹³Herald and Times, November 26, 1876.

president, called for a repeal of the crop lien law, and for the organization of a stock company to build a warehouse at Union Springs.⁹⁴ This meeting was reported well attended, but it was one of the last Grange activities reported in the local paper.⁹⁵

By 1883 writers in the papers were again calling on Bullock farmers to form agricultural societies. In June, 1883, Dr. C. H. Franklin organized a "Truck and Fruit Growers Association for those interested in truck growing for the market."⁹⁶ In organizing this association he stated that "Bullock needs more truck and fruit and less cotton."⁹⁷ The Herald saw the association as "an excellent move toward a new prosperity for the county."⁹⁸

In 1884 I. F. Culver called a meeting of farmers to organize a farmers club "to revolutionize and bring about a change in farming in this county."⁹⁹ Culver was an enthusiastic advocate of the self-sustaining farm and was the leader in every agricultural movement in the county from 1865 to 1900. In September, 1884 the farmers organized a society with Culver as president, the purpose of which was

⁹⁴Herald, January 13, 1879.

⁹⁵Ibid.

⁹⁶Ibid., June 6, 1883.

⁹⁷Ibid.

⁹⁸Ibid. The Herald claimed to be the first paper to advocate a Bureau of Agriculture.

⁹⁹Ibid., August 20, 1884.

"mutual improvement of its members in all matters pertaining to agriculture and kindred subjects."¹⁰⁰ This group was outspoken in its demands to repeal the crop lien law in the county. Interest soon died and in September, 1887 Culver was again pleading for an organization of farmers. The Bullock County Agricultural and Development Society was formed in September, 1887 and resolved to have a stock exhibit and offered premiums for the best cows, horses, mules, and poultry.¹⁰¹ The society also voted to organize a stock company to establish a broom factory in the county with shares to be sold for ten dollars.¹⁰² There was a great deal of interest in organizations to improve the status of the farmer. A letter from Perote stated:

...the experience of the past year (1887) ought certainly to teach a good lesson in regard to the one crop system. We need more manufactures and local farmers' clubs.¹⁰³

The Herald about this time began efforts to attract industry as a means of improving the county's economy.

The Herald, December 21, 1887, reported the price of cotton good, debts paid, and a general good times over the county. However, the Bullock County Reporter stated that

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., October 8, 1884.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., September 21, 1887.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

1,604 farm mortgages were recorded in 1887 and commented that "it is impossible for people to prosper when their property is encumbered with mortgages and profits consumed by interest."¹⁰⁴ It was impossible, however, for the farmers to get credit without mortgaging their crops.

The efforts of I. F. Culver to improve conditions for the farmers during this period should be noted. Nearly every issue of the local papers had some article on farm improvement, crop diversification, and other matters related to the farm. He urged farmers to raise everything at home and make their farms self-sustaining by raising corn, cattle, hogs, horses and by gardening and producing their own meat and syrup.¹⁰⁵ His ideals were well stated in an article in which he said:

Let us strive to make our homes pleasant and attractive; adorning them with shades, fruits, and flowers, and let us organize in every community a farmers organization for mutual benefit and instruction...¹⁰⁶

Culver's efforts could seem to attract no lasting interest for by July, 1888, the Mt. Hilliard club, which wanted to organize a farmers warehouse, asked through the papers what had become of the Agricultural and Development Society.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴Reporter, January 27, 1888. Although short-lived, this paper took a militant stand against the railroads, bankers, and high tariff.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., April 27, 1888.

¹⁰⁶Ibid.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., July 20, 1888.

The formation of the Farmer's Alliance and its efforts against the bagging and fertilizer trusts attracted the attention of the farm leaders of the county and met with a great deal of enthusiasm. A mass meeting of farmers held at Union Springs in July, 1888 to protest the price of cotton storage, instructed the chairman, W. A. Curry, to invite officials of the State Alliance to be at their next meeting.¹⁰⁸ At a meeting held at Flora, it was resolved to use foreign bagging and urged that farmers wrap their cotton in guano sacks.¹⁰⁹ By September the Alliance was firmly established in the county with I. F. Culver, president; D. F. McCall, vice president; W. A. Curry, treasurer; and J. A. Williams, secretary of the county organization. The Reporter stated "our farmers are now better organized than ever before" while in the same issue merchants advertised non-trust bagging to Alliance friends.¹¹⁰ An Alliance resolution requested merchants not to purchase jute bagging and threatened that members would not patronize any merchant who "ignores the action of the Alliance in reference to bagging."¹¹¹ Local correspondents of the papers supporting

¹⁰⁸Ibid., July 27, 1888.

¹⁰⁹Ibid.

¹¹⁰Ibid., June 12, 1889.

¹¹¹Herald, June 12, 1889.

the Alliance wrote letters such as this: "Let us work for the Alliance, a county fair, and a cotton factory."¹¹²

In 1888 the county raised over 20,000 bales of cotton worth eight cents per pound, approximately \$800,000. Most of this money was taken out of the county to pay for food, tools, and ready-to-wear goods. The Alliance sought to retain more of this money in the county by encouraging manufacturing and urging farmers to raise their own food supplies.¹¹³ In an address to the Alliance at Greenwood, A. Hill urged farmers to "plant corn and more corn to assure an abundance of meat and bread."¹¹⁴

A lowering of interest rates was from the first one of the major concerns of the Bullock County Alliance. The prevailing interest rates in the county were seldom less than twenty per cent, with some reported paying as high as sixty per cent.¹¹⁵ At a meeting of the Alliance in April, 1889, steps were taken to establish an Alliance Bank at Union Springs. The bank was never established but the Alliance claimed that its threats to organize one caused the merchants to loan their money at ten per cent.¹¹⁶

¹¹²Ibid., January 23, 1889.

¹¹³Ibid., April 10, 1889.

¹¹⁴Ibid., January 12, 1889.

¹¹⁵Ibid., May 29, 1889.

¹¹⁶Herald, May 29, 1889.

This success was of short duration, for two months later the Herald complained "cheap money is hard to get in Bullock County" and added "we cannot borrow for less than twelve to fifteen per cent."¹¹⁷ In January, 1890, the bank still not established, the Alliance resolved to support any firm that would loan money at eight per cent.¹¹⁸

During its first years in the county the main program of the Alliance was the improvement of the farmers through a program of self-aid. Lecturers addressed their audiences on such topics as reduction of cotton acreage in favor of food and feed crops; the proper use of fertilizers; better methods of cultivation; and economy and good business management. A county Alliance meeting in 1891 published the following program of discussions:

1. How best to stop leaks on the farm?
2. Which pays best, cotton or corn and hogs?
3. Will it pay to raise horses in Bullock?
4. Which of the commercial fertilizers is best?
5. Shall a county fair be held in the fall?¹¹⁹

The Bullock County Alliance supported strongly the nationalist Populist platform and petitioned congress to vote for farmers' warehouses, at the same time urging abolition of the national bank system.¹²⁰ The first

¹¹⁷Ibid., July 10, 1889.

¹¹⁸Ibid., January 8, 1890.

¹¹⁹Ibid., March 18, 1891.

¹²⁰Herald, April 9, 1890.

direct entrance of the Bullock Alliance into politics was in 1890 when "a recent meeting of the Alliance adjourned into a Democratic mass meeting."¹²¹ Reuben F. Kolb spoke at the invitation of the Mt. Hilliard Alliance and the editor of the Herald commented that the "rank and file of Bullock's democracy is unalterably in favor of nominating Kolb as governor."¹²² With its entry into active politics, the Alliance lost much support in Bullock County, particularly that of I. F. Culver, leader of the farm groups for so many years.¹²³ From its entry into organized politics the Bullock Alliance drifted rapidly into an active political group that all but forgot the original purpose of its inception.

An interesting phase of the Alliance movement was an attempt to form a Negro Alliance. A meeting of Negroes was held in the court house at Union Springs where the incendiary remarks of Negro leaders caused alarm among the whites. The original purpose was to form an organization under a white leader, but Negro leaders forced most of the darkies to withdraw to the Baptist Church where they formed their own organization.¹²⁴

Bullock County has always been almost exclusively an

¹²¹Ibid.

¹²²Ibid.

¹²³Ibid., July 6, 1892. The Herald withdrew as official organ for the Alliance in March, 1892.

¹²⁴Herald, January 15, 1890. No other mention of the Negro Alliance was made.

agricultural county. As the drastic effects of a one-crop economy struck, a great many people realized the need for industries to supplement income as well as produce goods for consumption in the county, thereby saving high transportation costs. Numerous attempts were made prior to 1900 to start industries and while many were incorporated, few began actual operations. The Granger and Alliance programs advocated the formation of industries in the county and several attempts were made to get a cotton mill into operation in the county.¹²⁵ The Alliance also backed efforts to construct an oil mill and broom factory.¹²⁶

In 1880 the citizens of the county made an effort to attract industry to the area through a special trade edition of the Herald. This edition, setting forth the attractions and advantages of the area, was mailed to different parts of the United States, the Central of Georgia Railroad sending 2,000 copies to the North.¹²⁷ It was hoped that this publicity would attract western farmers as well as new industry to the county. There was a shortage of hands in the county at this time for many had left to work for wages in other places.

¹²⁵Ibid., March 20, 1889.

¹²⁶Ibid., May 15, 1889.

¹²⁷Ibid., March 14, 1888.

The Herald was a leading advocate of industry and supported all attempts to establish any sort of manufacturing in the county. A popular method of raising capital was to establish stock companies which tried to sell shares in their budding industries. For example, a company was organized in 1887 to sell shares at ten dollars to establish a broom factory and rice mill in Union Springs. These efforts nearly all failed because sufficient capital could not be raised to begin operations.¹²⁸ The Herald also organized a society with members paying dues of two dollars to be used to either attract some industry or set up one if enough money could be attained.¹²⁹

The most successful industry, which remained the only one of importance for nearly sixty years, was the cotton mill at Union Springs. The Phoenix Cotton Mill began operations in 1877. A stock company organized for the purpose of building and operating the mill failed, but former Probate Judge W. H. Black began the operation anyway with his private capital.¹³⁰ Black claimed that cotton costing ten cents a pound could be turned into yarn and sold immediately for twenty-two cents and he hoped to double the value of Bullock's cotton crop. Black's mill went out of operation, but it formed a nucleus for others

¹²⁸Herald, November 8, 1887.

¹²⁹Ibid.

¹³⁰McNair, op. cit., p. 124. Black had been the much disliked radical judge.

to build on. A stock company was organized in 1881 to sell subscriptions for a cotton manufacturing company at \$100 per share with twenty per cent to be paid in cash. This company organized by B. T. Eley, W. A. Stakeley, Joel Rainer, and S. J. Frazer planned the manufacture of yarn rope and other textile articles. The venture fell through because its incorporators could not raise sufficient capital to begin operations.¹³¹

The Union Springs Cotton Mills were incorporated April 1, 1889, by B. T. Eley, C. H. Franklin, W. E. Pierce, J. W. Rainer, and J. B. Hunter. The company was capitalized at \$100,000 and shares were sold at \$100 per share to be paid in \$20 installments. The mills were incorporated to "manufacture cotton and wool into various and sundry articles, fabrics, and textiles."¹³² In April, 1891, this mill employed forty hands who were paid wages of twenty-five cents to two dollars per day.¹³³ Four years later the mill was still in operation and declared a semi-annual dividend on all stock of three per cent. This mill was sold to the Comer interests in 1923.

The county's other industries consisted of gins and cotton oil mills in various places. As their employment was seasonal, no definite estimate can be made of their

¹³¹Herald, June 1, 1881.

¹³²Bullock County Incorporations, Book 1 (Judge of Probate Office, Union Springs, Alabama), p. 42.

¹³³Herald, April 15, 1891.

value to the county. Almost every community had a cotton gin which afforded employment for a few workers. Some communities had wood working industries such as carriage and wagon making and barrel making. Perote had a carriage and wagon factory as well as a steam gin in 1880.¹³⁴ Union Springs had an oil mill, two gins, and a carriage factory. At Mitchell's Station an oil mill and refining company secured delivery of cotton and seed by liens and mortgages on crops.¹³⁵ In 1890 R. E. Wright and H. L. King incorporated a cotton mill at Midway, but the project was never realized. Scattered sawmills furnished jobs for some, but forest products were not important. In 1880 the total value of forest products sold was \$6,233, a value that increased to \$25,434 in 1900.¹³⁶

In 1880 there were 18 industries employing sixty-one males over the age of 16 in the county.¹³⁷ The value of products these industries produced was \$60,558. Wages amounted to \$10,000, an average of \$154 per worker for the year.¹³⁸ In 1890 there were twenty industries employing about 150 men who earned an average wage of \$116 per

¹³⁴ Herald, February 10, 1880.

¹³⁵ Bullock County Incorporations, Book I, p.91.

¹³⁶ United States Census of 1880, III, p. 252; United States Census of 1900, VI, p. 621.

¹³⁷ United States Census of 1880, II, p. 88.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

year.¹³⁹ The value of products sold that year was \$140,775.¹⁴⁰ In 1900 187 men, 9 women, and 21 children were employed in manufacturing in Bullock County with the men receiving an average wage of \$170, the women \$190, and children \$65 annually.¹⁴¹ It is interesting to note that in 1900 the county's industry returned a profit of \$66,000 on a capital investment of \$264,000, a rather good rate of interest on money invested.¹⁴²

Union labor was unknown and labor troubles were few. The Herald reported in 1889 that "Niggers returned from Birmingham demoralized labor at the oil mill." In the same issue the editor applauded the action of the railroad in sending a load of workers to take the places of laborers who were on strike.¹⁴³

The first bank in Bullock County was incorporated in 1884 by Lewie Sessions, J. H. Eley, M. B. Houghton, and C. S. Anderson.¹⁴⁴ Known as the Bullock County Bank, it met a pressing need for banking facilities in Union Springs and the county. Previous banking business was done by

¹³⁹United States Census of 1890, XI, p. 338.

¹⁴⁰Ibid.

¹⁴¹United States Census of 1900, VIII, p. 8.

¹⁴²Ibid.

¹⁴³Herald, May 29, 1889.

¹⁴⁴Bullock County Incorporations, Book 1, p. 14.

merchants and by individuals. Loans were made by merchants who furnished farmers and by individuals who had money to lend. Interest generally was high, ranging over twenty per cent during the 1880's. The Merchants and Farmers Bank was established by the Rainer family in 1890. This bank was incorporated at a time when the Alliance was making plans to set up a bank, but the Rainer family was not connected with the Farmers' Alliance.¹⁴⁵ The James and Midway Bank at Midway was organized in 1903 by H. L. King, M. W. Tarver, and L. E. Cartledge.¹⁴⁶ This was the only bank established outside of Union Springs.

¹⁴⁵Herald, January 29, 1890.

¹⁴⁶Bullock County Incorporations, Book 1, p. 123.

CHAPTER IV

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Bullock County was created by the legislature from parts of Macon, Montgomery, Pike, and Barbour Counties on December 5, 1866.¹ The new county was named in honor of Edward Courtney Bullock, lawyer, politician, and soldier who lost his life during the Civil War.

Section Two of the act creating the new county provided:

James J. Norman, Joel T. Crawford, and Malichi Ivey, free-holders of the said new county of Bullock, be, and they are hereby appointed a commission whose duty it shall be to hold an election on a day to be fixed by the Governor, for such county, officers as are or may be authorized by law to be elected by the people of each county of the State.²

These commissioners were to appoint managers for the election in the precincts of the county and all persons who were qualified voters at the time of election and who resided within the bounds of the new county were entitled to take part in the election. The managers were to make returns of the elections to the county commission who in turn would certify the results to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State would then issue certificates of election.

¹Acts of Alabama, 1866-67, pp. 65-68

²Ibid.

The commissioners were also authorized to hold two elections for the selection of a county seat. Three sites were to be nominated for the seat of government, neither being closer than five miles to the other, nor more than ten miles from the center of the county. In the second election the two sites receiving the highest number of votes should be voted for as the permanent seat of the county government.

Provisions were made for such matters as the establishment of precincts and beats, the settlement of debts to the counties which had lost territory to the new county, the establishment of courts, and the appointment by the governor of commissioners to take the place of those who died, were removed, or refused to serve.³

The first election was held January 29, 1867, and the following officers were elected: Judge of Probate, D. A. McCall; Sheriff, F. C. Hall; Tax Assessor, Thomas Mabson; Tax Collector, John McGowan; and County Superintendent of Education, A. Hill. Commissioners elected were P. B. Baldwin, Louis Christian, Howell Peebles, and Malachi Ivey. In the election for a county seat Union Springs, Aberfoil, and Station No. Seven on the Mobile and Girard Railroad were nominated. Union Springs received a majority of the

³Acts of Alabama, 1866-67, pp. 65-68.

votes and was declared the permanent seat of justice of Bullock County.⁴ Although there was no courthouse, the Baptist Church had a large basement, and this was used as a temporary courthouse. It was said that Judge McCall certainly had the church over him, whether or not it was behind him.⁵

The first session of the commissioners court was held February 11, 1867. At this meeting a surveyor was hired, and beats were set up.⁶ The probate judge was instructed to borrow \$10,000 at eight per cent to begin operation of the county government, and \$2,000 was borrowed from Commissioner Howell Peebles for immediate use.⁷ A committee was appointed to select a location for a poor house, and another committee was selected to inquire what was necessary to be done in regard to indigent persons.⁸ Later sessions reported new roads laid out, bridges repaired, and a jail committee set up.⁹ In 1868 the county treasurer reported that \$16,165 had been collected in taxes, and the treasury

⁴Certificate of Election, February 1, 1867 (Department of Archives and History).

⁵Union Springs Times, March 13, 1867.

⁶Minutes of Commissioners Court, Bullock County, I, p. 5.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid., p. 6.

had a balance of \$5,567.¹⁰

The officials of the new county found themselves burdened not only with the business of establishing a county government but also with the problems that faced the South after the Civil War. While the county had the advantage of being far removed from the field of the war, a small garrison of Union troops was stationed at Union Springs until the latter part of 1868.¹¹ More than that, the county was faced with the problem of 17,000 freed slaves, who accounted for two-thirds of the population. These Negroes caused much trouble by quarreling and fighting among themselves, and the editor was constantly calling for more police protection for the whites of Union Springs.¹² Editor Drake of the Times also regaled the Republican leader Thaddeus Stevens in no uncertain terms: "Do you hear Old Thad? Four of your loyalists murdered—if you don't do something your nigger allies won't poll any votes to hurt."¹³ As the months of 1867 passed, the pall of reconstruction deepened over Bullock County. In May the Negroes sent two of their number—D. M. Hill and Benjamin Royal—to Mobile to represent them at a colored mass meeting, and

¹⁰Ibid., p. 47.

¹¹Times, May 23, 1868.

¹²Times, September 25, 1867.

¹³McNair, op. cit., p. 87.

in June the Freedmen's Bureau established schools in the county.¹⁴

When registration took place in June there were 4,458 voters registered, 1,394 whites and 3,064 Negroes, almost three to one in favor of the Negro.¹⁵ The Democrats set to work immediately to win the favor of the Negroes and persuade them with kindness and entertainment to vote the Democratic and Conservative tickets in the elections to be held in September of 1867.¹⁶ The Union League had been organized in the county, and the whites feared the consequences if it took an active interest in politics. The middle of August found the movement directed against radicalism in full swing. At Midway there was a big barbecue in which several hundred whites and over a thousand Negroes participated.¹⁷ White speakers outdid themselves with persuasive appeals to the Negroes for cooperation and loyalty, and Negro speakers were listened to respectfully as they denounced radicalism and promised to stick to the white folks.¹⁸ By fall of 1867, to the dismay of the whites,

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Times, August 21, 1867.

¹⁶McNair, op. cit., p. 94.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 92

¹⁸Ibid., p. 95.

the Negro population seemed bound to the radical party. In September J. C. Keffer "convoked his leaguers, two thousand strong on Saturday in Union Springs where he taught them the principles of radicalism."¹⁹ At this meeting Negro leaders such as Ben Royal and "Old Speed" cast insults and invective at the whites. Following the meeting thousands of Negroes swarmed to Union Springs, and the marshall and extra police were hard put to keep order in the town.²⁰

In the election for delegates to the state convention in October, the four radical candidates received 2,400 votes, while the Democratic candidates received only 600.²¹ Bullock County Democrats had failed to get the Negro vote and were forced to admit that the Negroes had rushed headlong into the arms of Thad Stevens' radicals. Meanwhile, the Union League was increasing in size and strength, and its work was becoming more obvious and threatening. A council of the league was organized near Perote and threatened to take over the government of the community. Later it made an attempt to control the government of the county.²² This council elected its own sheriff and court

¹⁹Ibid., p. 99.

²⁰Times, September 25, 1867.

²¹McNair, op. cit., p. 95.

²²Ibid., p. 99.

and proceeded to administer justice for the area before being forcibly overthrown by citizens of Perote.²³

Strangely enough, however, there was no evidence of Ku Klux Klan methods in the county, and not a single whipping or other outrage was mentioned in Bullock County.²⁴

The whites were not submitting to radicalism docilely. Before Christmas, 1867, a meeting was called to "combat mongrelism and that nefarious constitution proposed by the recent convention in Montgomery."²⁵ Conservative clubs were organized in every community to take measures for self-protection. In January, 1868, a notice in the Times suggested to conservative voters "that you use every means to keep as many freedmen as possible from the polls on election day."²⁶ In the elections held in February Negroes marched to the polls and voted slips handed them by the Union Leaguers, but not one white man of the county voted.²⁷ W. H. Black, a white radical, was elected probate judge, and D. H. Hill and Lawrence Speed, both Negroes, were elected to the legislature.²⁸ Benjamin F. Royal, head of the Union

²³Ibid., p. 100.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Times, December 14, 1868.

²⁶Ibid., January 25, 1868.

²⁷Ibid., February 8, 1868.

²⁸Ibid. Speed was later tried for murder.

League, was elected to the state senate and served in that capacity for nine years—for a time being the only Negro in that house.²⁹ In July, 1868, a radical, Thomas Ramsey, was appointed sheriff; Solomon McCall replaced McGowan as tax collector, and John Siler took the place of Thomas Mabson as assessor.³⁰ The county's opinion of these men was aptly stated by editor Drake of the Times, who described Siler as an "ugly, selfish scoundrel, rapacious as a wolf and sneaking as a jackal."³¹

In the election for president the Republicans polled 2,103 votes for Grant, while the Democrats polled 1,634.³² During 1869, there was a lull in the politics of the county, and the anti-radicals made plans for recapturing the government of the county by asking all voters to vote in the next elections. There was renewed political agitation in 1870 when 800 Negroes, led by a colored teacher named Slade, held a Republican convention in Conecuh Swamp, near Union Springs.³³ Democrat hopes arose when the radicals split in the convention, and two tickets for the legislature were nominated.³⁴ The whites urged unity, but

²⁹McNair, op. cit., p. 102.

³⁰Times, July 25, 1868.

³¹Ibid., October 3, 1868.

³²Ibid., October 21, 1868.

³³Ibid., July 11, 1870.

³⁴The Negroes felt the white Republicans were pushing them out.

the Republicans won two to one, electing D. A. McCall, G. M. Drake, and Lawrence Speed to the state house.³⁵ Only the latter, Speed, was a Negro.³⁶ The Republicans had achieved this victory partly by circulating reports that the Negroes would be put back into slavery if the Democrats won.

Negroes were beginning to appear on the jury in the county during 1870, the first one sitting during the fall term of circuit court.³⁷ In the spring of 1871 there were blacks on every jury except one, but they were usually in the minority.³⁸

In the county elections of November, 1872, W. H. Black was again elected probate judge, James Cowan was reelected sheriff, and Solomon McCall tax collector. Other officers elected were C. J. L. Cuningham, superintendent of education; Henry Hooton, assessor; Jesse Lock, county treasurer; and P. B. Baldwin, Lewis Christian, Howell Peebles, and Malachi Ivey, commissioners. Black, Cowan, McCall, Cuningham, Hooton, and Locke were radicals, but none were Negroes.³⁹

³⁵McNair, op. cit., p. 112.

³⁶Bullock was one of nine counties to elect a Negro.

³⁷McNair, op. cit., p. 112.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Ibid.

Work upon the courthouse was proceeding, and, as the Democrats saw signs of radical disunity during 1872, they determined that no Republican should desecrate the offices of the new structure. Conservative clubs were organized to back Greeley and Brown, and the Democrats looked on in glee as radical meetings were held in an atmosphere of fist-fighting and name-calling.⁴⁰ However, in the November election the Republicans won by a majority of 1,876 votes.⁴¹

The two years following the disruption in the radical ranks were characterized by an effort to restore harmony and to keep the county in the Republican camp. In July, 1874, both Democrats and Republicans held meetings at the county seat. The number of Negroes at the republican council was about five hundred, a decided reduction.⁴² The Democrats showed great enthusiasm and expressed the view that the whites were more intelligent and capable and should, therefore, be the custodians of the government.⁴³ There was even talk of a race riot, and hotheads advocated the formation of armed units to regain control of the county

⁴⁰Herald and Times, September 4, 1872.

⁴¹Ibid., November 15, 1872.

⁴²McNair, op. cit., p. 115.

⁴³Ibid.

government.⁴⁴ In the October elections the Republicans won by a majority of 1,647 votes, a reduction of 229 from the election of 1872, and a gain for the Democrats of 397 votes.⁴⁵

Judge Black was severely criticized for making the bond of county officials too low and of often allowing ignorant Negroes to sign bonds. The Democrats were forced to admit that Black was competent, however, and the county suffered little from mismanagement during the radical period.⁴⁶

The Democrats won their first election since the Civil War in 1875 by a vote of 1,351 to 1,282.⁴⁷ The tide was turning, and in August, 1876, the Democrats won the county elections. In the November election the county went Democratic by 385 votes, and the Herald and Times exclaimed, "Don't choke it back any longer boys—Holler for Tilden and Hendricks: They are surely elected."⁴⁸ However, the Republicans did not give up without a struggle. A United States Senate Investigating Committee was sent to the county

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 116. Whipping clubs were organized to force Negroes to vote Republican.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 118.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 119.

to investigate election frauds. Twelve citizens of the county were arrested by the radical sheriff, Youngblood, but were later released.⁴⁹ One of the largest Republican boxes, Aberfoil, was lost by the returning officers in fording a stream, and at Ridgely the votes were destroyed during a fist-fight among the election managers.⁵⁰ These and other tricks were resorted to in the effort to overthrow the Republicans, and the Democrats did not consider it wrong to do this.

Radical Judge Black resigned in May, 1877, and the governor appointed B. D. Thornton to take his place.⁵¹ With Black's resignation the Democrats at last gained full control of Bullock again. The Republicans never again elected an official in Bullock County, but the Democrats for the next fifteen years used the threat of Republican and Negro control as a means of insuring unity in the party. Actually, the threat was real for some years, as the Republicans polled a good many votes and often supported so-called independent candidates that ran from time to time. In 1880 C. J. L. Cuningham, candidate for probate judge,

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 121. Fourteen white Democrats and four Negro Republicans were on the grand jury.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 120. No one was injured in this fight.

⁵¹List of Officers, Bullock County (Department of Archives and History), p. 4.

said: "I seek Republican and Democrat votes both white and black."⁵²

Democratic candidates were nominated by convention in Bullock County. Delegates were elected from each beat, and candidates were pledged to support the nominees.⁵³ In 1880 the Herald said that "it is of tremendous importance to preserve party harmony for the Republicans will make a desperate effort to recapture the county."⁵⁴ At the Republican convention that year there were two hundred Negroes and two whites who did not succeed in nominating a county slate, and the chairman, Benjamin Royal, complained that too many Negroes sold their votes to the Democrats.⁵⁵ In the election, Democrat I. B. Feagin received 1,114 votes to Republican R. D. Thornton's 191 for Probate Judge.⁵⁶

The main issues in politics during the 1880's were the attempts of the Negroes and Republicans to gain control of the county government and Democratic efforts to resist them, the abolition of the convention method of nominating

⁵²Herald, May 11, 1880. He was defeated.

⁵³Ibid., June 29, 1880.

⁵⁴Ibid., June 22, 1880.

⁵⁵Ibid., July 13, 1880.

⁵⁶Ibid., July 20, 1881.

candidates, the substitution of the primary by the Democrats, and the prohibition question. The Herald reported in 1882 that "we have reasons to believe that The Republicans have put out a secret ticket for the Negroes to vote."⁵⁷ However, as the Negro leaders had trouble getting their constituents to the polls and could not control those who did turn out, the Democrats won the state election by 900 votes.⁵⁸ In that same year a Negro, G. R. Miller, was nominated for Congress by a Republican convention in Union Springs to oppose William C. Oates. Miller received 292 votes in the county to Oates, 761. Negroes carried the Union Springs box, and no election was held at Fitzpatrick, a heavy Negro precinct.⁵⁹ This was one of the last organized attempts of the Republicans to win an election in the county. The party remained organized until 1892, but by that time only white men were active in it. The Democrats made great efforts to enlist the Negroes on their side. The Bullock County Democratic convention in 1884 called on all to see that the Negroes voted Democratic and added "it is gratifying to see that our colored citizens are annually coming to their proper place."⁶⁰

⁵⁷Ibid., August 1, 1882.

⁵⁸Ibid., August 9, 1882.

⁵⁹Ibid., November 8, 1882.

⁶⁰Ibid., July 30, 1884.

Those who did not come to "their proper place" and persisted in voting for the Black Republicans were counted out in elections or tricked into voting Democrat. In the general election of 1888 the Negroes claimed the whites voted secretly at night, and in Union Springs the polls were not even opened.⁶¹ In 1890 Jones received 2,068 votes to the Republican Long's 659. The Republicans carried one box, which was thrown out.⁶² Thus the whites were assured that the Negro Republicans would never again regain control of the county.

While the Democrats might be unified in opposing the Republicans and Negroes in the county, at times they gave no signs of being together on any other issue. In 1886 there were many Democrats who were calling for a primary election to nominate county officials instead of the convention nomination. The editors of the Herald were among the leading proponents of the primary plan.⁶³ In June the paper stated: "The primary is the fairest means of obtaining the choice of a majority of voters—under this plan there will be no trickery of the convention."⁶⁴ Citizens

⁶¹Ibid., November 9, 1888.

⁶²Ibid., August 13, 1890.

⁶³Ibid., June 20, 1886.

⁶⁴Ibid.

used the local papers to aid their differences, and for the next two years the issues of the primary or convention were thoroughly discussed in them. In 1886 the county Democratic executive committee called a convention to determine whether the convention system should be changed. In this convention the delegates voted down the primary plan 68 to 37 votes.⁶⁵ Opponents of the primary used the old threat of Negro rule to bolster their arguments. A correspondent from Farriersville stated: "We gained victory through the convention system—the Republicans are not dead in the county and will use the Negroes to vote out the whites again."⁶⁶ Others complained of the heavy expense of elections and of the time that would be lost by hands leaving fields to vote.⁶⁷ Citizens in rural areas feared that the heavy vote from Union Springs would dominate the elections, as candidates would need only a plurality of votes to be elected.⁶⁸ The biggest argument against the primary, however, continued to be that the whites might be defeated in open election.⁶⁹

⁶⁵Ibid., May 19, 1886.

⁶⁶Ibid., March 17, 1886.

⁶⁷Ibid., March 31, 1886.

⁶⁸Ibid., February 22, 1888.

⁶⁹Ibid.

Supporters of the primary plan objected to the "demagogues who oversee conventions" and to local men who influenced election of delegates to the conventions.⁷⁰ One writer to the paper stated that "there are many confederate veterans who need jobs and the people would vote for them if they had a chance."⁷¹ The biggest argument against the convention was that the conventions were "rotten" and denied the people the "right to say who shall be his candidate."⁷²

In April, 1888, the Democratic executive committee decided to put the question to the people of the county, and, in the election, it was voted to nominate candidates in a democratic primary, the candidate having the highest number of votes to be elected.⁷³

The first county primary was held in May, 1888, and H. W. Smith called upon all Democrats to forget their differences and support their party in the general election.⁷⁴ In the general election the Democratic nominees won, thus allaying the fears of those who feared defeat, even though Negroes had to be forcibly restrained from voting

⁷⁰Ibid., March 17, 1886.

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Ibid., February 15, 1888.

⁷³Reporter, April 1, 1888.

⁷⁴Ibid., June 1, 1888.

at several places.⁷⁵ S. T. Frazer was elected probate judge, A. H. Pickett, clerk of the circuit court, and J. W. Crossley, tax collector.

Prohibition was an issue which arose from time to time in Bullock County. In 1885 letters to the Herald were written by citizens approving a prohibition law for the county.⁷⁶ W. C. Jordan of Midway was a strong prohibition leader. Senator J. T. Norman was opposed to prohibition, and for his stand he was accused by the prohibitionists of catering to the Negroes. In 1886 the state representatives of the county, C. H. Laney, J. H. Reynolds, and S. T. Frazer, presented a bill to prohibit the sale of whiskey in Bullock County.⁷⁷ In 1887 the Herald said that "after two months the people are pleased with the operation of the law."⁷⁸

From time to time there was some political agitation to do away with prohibition, but, in the main, the issue remained divorced from politics. The Herald of 1888 stated that "the leaders of high license have made no attempt to make it an issue in the races for the legislature." The Herald further stated that it would aid no independent movement in order to repeal prohibition.⁷⁹

⁷⁵Ibid., August 10, 1888.

⁷⁶Herald, February 18, 1885.

⁷⁷Acts of Alabama, 1886-87, p. 800.

⁷⁸Herald, March 9, 1887.

⁷⁹Ibid., February 8, 1888.

As the Farmers' Alliance became stronger in the county, political issues pivoted around the efforts of the Alliance to elect sympathetic candidates. Reuben Kolb spoke at Mt. Hilliard in 1890, and the Herald reported that "the rank and file of Bullock's democracy is unalterably in favor of nominating Kolb for governor."⁸⁰ In the election for delegates to the state convention, Kolb men carried the election, and the delegates were instructed to vote for Kolb.⁸¹

In 1891 the Herald suggested that state officials be elected by the direct primary in order to do away with the unscrupulous wire-pulling of the convention. This suggestion had the backing of the Alliance leaders of the county, as the Herald was the official organ of the county Alliance.⁸²

A relief from taxes was felt in 1891 when the Herald reported that, because of a surplus of \$15,000 in the county treasury, the county commission had decided to collect no county taxes on real and personal property.⁸³ This was a great relief to the people in that time of financial distress.

⁸⁰ Ibid., April 9, 1890.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid., May 27, 1891.

⁸³ Ibid., July 22, 1891.

In the congressional race in 1891, the County Alliance resolved that "William C. Oates having demonstrated that he is not in concurrence with the will of the people of Bullock County be requested to resign his position."⁸⁴ The resolution was signed by the Alliance leaders, J. A. Weems and T. F. McGowan. The Democrats met at Midway, resolved confidence in Oates, and condemned the methods "now being adopted to disrupt and divide our party."⁸⁵ Democrat beat clubs were organized to support Oates, and in the election there was no opposition. The Alliance had "thrown their banner to the breeze", however, and for the next few years every election in the county was a contest between Alliance men and regular Democrats. In September J. C. Hixson and P. F. Miles became editors of the Herald, and the policy of that paper changed to a strong stand against the Alliance.⁸⁶ The paper supported Jones in the race for governor and ran derisive comments about Kolb. The race stirred a great controversy in the county, and the Herald reported that the Alliance was rigging the elections of delegates from the beats of the county.⁸⁷ A few days later the Herald called on all candidates to answer certain

⁸⁴Ibid.

⁸⁵Ibid.

⁸⁶Ibid., September 16, 1891. The Herald had been official organ of the County Alliance.

⁸⁷Ibid., March 2, 1892.

questions which were listed:

Do you believe in the Ocala platform? Would you follow the Alliance to a third party? Do you believe in the leaders, platform, and organization of the democratic party? Do you believe that the democratic party only can afford our mothers, wives and children the safety and protection they now enjoy?

In the election for delegates to the state convention Kolb men were elected by a large majority, and the delegates to the congressional convention, headed by C. W. Rumph, were further instructed not to vote for W. C. Oates as the congressional candidate.⁸⁹ At the convention, however, when it was found that Bullock County's was the only delegation that refused to vote for Oates, C. W. Rumph persuaded the delegation to ignore the instructions and made Oates' nomination unanimous.⁹⁰

Prior to the election the Bullock Alliance had not thought of forming a third party. Its president, J. A. Weems, said, "knowing the alliance is not political we ignore the third party...." Grimes further stated that he would not endorse the Ocala resolutions but favored warehouses in each county without government overseers.⁹¹

⁸⁸ Ibid., March 9, 1892.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid., September 14, 1892.

⁹¹ Ibid., March 16, 1892.

At the state Democratic convention all the Bullock delegates except N. B. Powell walked out to join the Kolb convention and were condemned by the Herald as "bolters who are ready to give the county over to the Negroes and Republicans."⁹² The Herald asked that Democrats take note of every man who voted for Kolb and publish his name in the paper in order that his right to vote in future elections might be challenged.⁹³ Clubs were formed over the county to work for Kolb or for Jones. Perote reported 55 members in a Jones club, while at Fitzpatrick 300 Negroes voted to support the regular Democrats and Jones.⁹⁴ As the campaign wore on, tempers grew hotter and hotter. Friend was pitted against friend, and much bitterness was felt over the county. The county Democratic executive committee declared that Kolb supporters were ruled out, and candidates who refused to pledge to Jones were removed from the ticket and replaced.⁹⁵

⁹²Ibid., June 29, 1892.

⁹³Ibid.

⁹⁴Ibid., July 6, 1892.

⁹⁵Ibid. The vote was 19 for expulsion and 18 against.

W. C. Huffman, candidate for the legislature, was removed as were T. L. Guthrie and James Bates, along with ten members of the executive committee.⁹⁶ The Kolbites offered their own ticket for county offices with James Jones for probate judge, and F. C. Hall for tax collector. On election day feeling ran high and fist fights and violent arguments were reported over the county.⁹⁷ The election results showed that Jones won an overwhelming victory in the county with 2,421 votes to 734 for Kolb.⁹⁸ No Kolb men were elected to county office, but Kolb won in the beats of Inverness, Union Church, Farriorville, and Indian Creek. The Kolbites met in September and under the leadership of W. C. Huffman, T. M. Hugh, and D. F. McCall voted to go into a third party and endorsed Weaver for president.⁹⁹

In October, probate judge S. T. Frazer and circuit clerk Alexander Pickett were arrested by the U. S. marshal for violating the law requiring persons of opposing parties as election officials.¹⁰⁰ The warrant was sworn by the Kolb leader, Huffman. The charge was thrown out by the

⁹⁶Ibid.

⁹⁷Ibid., July 27, 1892.

⁹⁸Ibid., August 3, 1892.

⁹⁹Ibid., September 14, 1892.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., October 12, 1892.

federal judge and Huffman went to court to compel Frazer to place populist managers at polls for the general election.¹⁰¹ In a letter to the Herald defending their action, Huffman, and Hough, and ten others said that "we are determined to have our votes counted."¹⁰² In the general election the Populists showed a large increase in strength though they did not poll a majority. Weaver received 1,483 votes, Cleveland 1, 844, and Harrison 75. Democrats over the county rejoiced. In Union Springs, led by Courtney Hixson, a cheering crowd hanged Kolb, Weaver, and Mrs. Lease in effigy.¹⁰³

With the election over, the people resumed their slow and easy course, with most people interested in the price of cotton and economic affairs. The county was feeling the effects of the hard times and many people were not able to pay their debts. The county government did not have enough money to operate because of the failure of the Central of Georgia Railroad to pay its taxes.

Interest in politics resumed early in 1894 when the county Democratic executive committee ruled that no one

¹⁰¹Ibid., October 19, 1892.

¹⁰²Ibid., November 2, 1892.

¹⁰³Ibid., November 16, 1892.

could vote in beat elections except those who had voted for Cleveland in 1892.¹⁰⁴ The Herald was backing Oates for governor and in the county primaries held in May, 1894, the county delegation was instructed to vote for the nomination of Oates.¹⁰⁵ Kolb supporters determined to elect their man and a Kolb organization was soon under way in the county. The so-called Jeffersonians formed their own county executive committee and held a separate convention. Inverness and Greenwood were the main Populist centers in the county and Kolb spoke to large and appreciative audiences there in August.¹⁰⁶ Though interest was high, the bitterness of the campaign of 1892 was lacking. In the election Oates received 2,309 votes, while Kolb polled only 292.¹⁰⁷

Kolb polled more votes, but his largest box, Farriersville, was thrown out. Kolb charged fraud, but the Herald reported it could find no Kolbites in the county who were dissatisfied.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁴Ibid., January 31, 1894.

¹⁰⁵Ibid., May 16, 1894.

¹⁰⁶Ibid., August 1, 1894.

¹⁰⁷Ibid.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., August 15, 1894.

CHAPTER V

SOCIAL PROBLEMS AND REFORM

One of the first problems of the county when it was organized was the relief of the poor. The Civil War had left many widows, orphans, and others without means of support and it fell to the county government to take care of such people. At the first meeting of the county commissioners in February, 1867, a committee was appointed to "enquire what is necessary to be done in regards to indigent persons." Another committee was instructed to select a location for a poor house and to make an estimate of its cost.¹ Until the poor house could be built, the probate judge was ordered to draw county warrants in favor of any named indigent for sums not to exceed \$10.00 for each person. It was reported that there were 300 indigent persons in the county in April, 1867.² The money paid to those unable to support themselves was little but it was the best the new government could do until a poor house could be built and taxes collected. Payments were sporadic, usually made on application. One person was listed as

¹Minutes of Commissioners Court (Judge of Probate Office, Union Springs, Alabama), I, p. 1.

²Ibid., p. 7.

drawing \$15.00 quarterly in 1867-1868 and others were allowed \$3.00 to \$5.00 per month.³ No distinction was made as to race as commissioners were requested to ascertain the poor in their districts without regard to race or color. Agents were sometimes named to administer relief in the county. The Times in 1867 said: "H. H. Smith is agent for subsistence for indigent and infirm in Bullock County and all should report to him immediately."⁴ The Times further asked that only those strictly destitute ask for such aid. In May, 1867, Judge McCall acknowledged receipt of 100 sacks of corn from the Southern Famine Relief Association in New York for destitute in the county.⁵ Relief of the poor took a good part of the county funds. In May, 1867, the assessor was instructed to assess 50 per cent on the state tax for indigent relief and for the jail.⁶ The county also paid burial expenses for those who died at the poor house or were supported by the county.⁷

³Ibid., p. 16.

⁴Times, April 17, 1867.

⁵Ibid., May 29, 1867.

⁶Minutes of Commissioners Court, I, p. 20.

⁷Ibid., p. 60.

When the poor house was built, the aged and those unable to work were expected to go there for care, but the pauper list was continued for those who did not wish to move. Most families expected to care for the aged and infirm in their families and it was a social stigma to allow members of one's family to go to the poor house. The poor house was built by the county, but run by private persons who contracted to feed and care for the inmates for either an overall sum or so much a person per month.⁸ In 1879, K. T. Jones was manager of the poor house and was allowed \$5.00 per capita a month for the care of those living there.⁹ Ten people, three white and seven colored, were living at the poor house at that time. According to grand jury reports the inmates of the poor house were always well cared for. In 1886 the report stated that the "poor house is in good repair and contains eleven paupers who are carefully and kindly cared for by Mr. Jones."¹⁰ In 1888, for the six months ending in August, the county paid \$167 to the poor house and \$1,058 to paupers living at home.¹¹ In August, 1894, a report stated that there were twelve inmates in the poor house "all well and kindly cared for."¹²

⁸Herald, October 27, 1879.

⁹Ibid., November 3, 1879.

¹⁰Ibid., February 7, 1886.

¹¹Ibid., August 22, 1888.

¹²Ibid., August 22, 1894.

However, the managers of the poor houses were expected to make their fees out of the money allotted them and according to local belief the poor house was often quite poor indeed. After 1888 the keep of the poor house was given to the lowest bidder, a practice which did no good to those who had to stay there.¹³

In 1894 the county did away with the pauper list and all those who needed help were required to go to the poor house.¹⁴ Insane persons were cared for at the poor house also. The editor of the Herald reported that four insane persons were kept locked up at the poor house in 1882 and he recommended that something be done to remedy the situation.

The government of Bullock County, formed immediately after the Civil War, faced the problem not only of setting up a new governmental organization, but of coping with some 17,000 freed slaves who were left free of any restraint or law. The whites, numbering about 7,000, were naturally quite disturbed at the situation. Large numbers of Negroes flocked to Union Springs and the town authorities were hard put to keep order.¹⁵ Owing to the large colored population,

¹³Ibid., October 5, 1888.

¹⁴Ibid., December 19, 1894.

¹⁵Times, September 5, 1866.

most crimes committed in the county were by Negroes, although many were allowed to go unpunished. Because of the fear of Negro uprisings, crime news generally condemned the Negro, especially if the act was against a white person. Negroes who committed crimes against whites were always punished, but inter-racial affairs were more often dismissed as "nigger scrapes."¹⁶ A letter to the Herald in 1891 voiced the old fear of the Negro and demanded that more Negroes be tried and punished for their crimes, but another writer said that if the Negroes were prosecuted for all their crimes the whites would be left with no help.¹⁷

There was a high incidence of crime in the county during the radical era, chiefly among the colored population. In 1867 the papers reported the circuit court docket filled with the "pets of Stevens who have not learned not to steal others property or break open stores."¹⁸ At Perote citizens were forced to take the law into their own hands to restrain a Negro council from hanging members of their own race.¹⁹ At several times Negroes assaulted white men who tried to keep order and get them back to work.²⁰

¹⁶Herald, October 28, 1891.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Times, November 9, 1867.

¹⁹McNsir, op. cit., p. 99.

²⁰Ibid.

It is to the lasting credit of the Negroes as well as whites that there was no more lawlessness during the radical era than happened.

Most of the court cases in the county were misdemeanors. Major crimes were limited to murder and burglary. In 1870 there were eleven convicts in the state penitentiary from Bullock County. Four were sent for murder and seven for burglary. Of these eleven, ten were Negroes.²¹ In 1868 the grand jury called especial attention to misdemeanors. Carrying concealed weapons, Sabbath breaking, fraudulent conveyance of property, and trespass were the common crimes reported.²² The same jury reported no improvement in the morals of the people, especially colored.²³ Fights, stealing, drunkenness, and carrying concealed weapons were common crimes among the Negroes.²⁴ Whites were often arrested for drunkenness, and for public profanity.²⁵ There were murders more often among the Negroes. A hanging was always an occasion for a holiday and Negroes from all the country would flock to Union Springs to see one.

²¹Arthur Bingham, "Report of State Treasurer," Alabama State Documents, 1870 (Montgomery, 1870), p. 8.

²²Times, May, 1869.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Herald, April 1, 1891.

²⁵Times, March 6, 1867.

Quarrels among whites sometimes ended in shootings and killings, especially among the lower class of whites.²⁶

Grand juries usually reported on public morals and the reports are indicative of the general state of crime in the county through the years. In 1872, the spring grand jury reported 48 true bills and deplored the condition of morals in the county.²⁷ In 1879 an increase in crimes and disorders

among the Negroes was reported, and the grand jury of that year asked the county commissioners to enlarge the iron cage in the jailhouse.²⁸ There were four indictments that year for violating the intermarriage laws and the offenders were jailed.²⁹ In April, 1880, the Herald reported 57

cases in the spring term of court, "mostly minor offenses," with the majority being for removing mortgaged property.³⁰

As the Negro became more settled in his new freedom crime in the county decreased and by 1888 the grand jury was able to report a gratifying improvement in public morals and called on the better class of colored to keep up their efforts to improve the morals of their race.³¹

²⁶Opinion expressed by J. L. Rumph, Perote, Alabama.

²⁷Herald and Times, May 1, 1873.

²⁸Herald, October 27, 1879.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Ibid., April 27, 1880.

³¹Ibid., February 22, 1888.

One of the first acts of the county government was to make plans for a jail and to establish a chain gang to labor on public works. Minor offenders were kept in the county jail and worked out their terms on the county gang.³² Those convicted of major crimes were sent to the state penitentiary. Of the eleven in the state institution of 1870 only two were serving terms of more than two years. Prisoners at the jail were fairly well treated. In answer to comments on the mistreatment of prisoners, the editor of the Herald in 1886 reported that the jail was comfortable, heated by a furnace, and the inmates supplied with plenty of blankets.³³ Prisoners sometimes died on the chain gang. The Reporter stated that one Negro died from exhaustion while working on the chain gang in 1880.³⁴

Convicts from Bullock County were leased through the convict lease system and most prisoners were thus disposed of after 1880.³⁵ Nineteen county prisoners were leased to J. W. Comer in 1879 at \$5.00 per head, and the following year Comer had fourteen leased for \$14.00 per month.³⁶ Local

³²Minutes of Commissioners Court, I, p. 5.

³³Herald, March 3, 1886.

³⁴Reporter, June 1, 1880.

³⁵Herald, November 3, 1880.

³⁶Ibid.

people sometimes leased rejected convicts for lower prices. In 1887 the county leased forty-one convicts to the Tennessee Coal and Iron Company for \$12.00 per month for first class workers.³⁷

Bullock County has the same court system of all counties in the state. Most cases in the early days began in justice of the peace courts in the beats of the county. In 1871 a county criminal court was set up to hear criminal cases from the justice of the peace courts. In 1875 this court was abolished and its jurisdiction returned to the circuit court.³⁸ Cases taken to justice of the peace courts usually resulted in a fine and dismissal. This practice became quite prevalent and in 1879 the grand jury reported corruption among the justices of the peace.³⁹ The Herald scored the erring justices for allowing crimes to go unpunished except for fines which the justice levied in order to collect his fee.⁴⁰

The doctor was a highly respected person in Bullock County. Doctors' families were accorded respect not given to others and the doctor himself was frequently the most

³⁷Ibid., November 9, 1887.

³⁸Acts of Alabama, 1874-1875, p. 204.

³⁹Herald, October 27, 1879.

⁴⁰Ibid.

trusted family adviser on matters other than medical. Bullock County was well supplied with members of the medical profession in its early days. Every community usually had its doctor who served faithfully its people, making his round over the country in the well known horse and buggy. Communities such as Perote, Inverness, Midway, and Shopton had at least one doctor in those days.⁴¹ Prominent doctors in Union Springs after the war were Drs. J. M. Foster, W. S. Mavson, G. C. Bell, G. H. Franklin, S. M. Hogan, and M. Foster. At Perote there were Drs. J. D. Rumph, William Walker, Frank Hixon, and Olin Ziegler. At Midway there were Drs. R. L. Butt, Groves Caldwell, A. C. Crymes. Others were Dr. Blue at Inverness, Drs. Emmett and John Guthrie, and Dr. Thomason.

The quality of the profession was as good as any of that day. One who remembers says about the only medicine doctors gave was calomel, quinine, and "pink pills."⁴² While doctors might be adored, people sometimes forget to pay. In 1886 an article in the Herald reported that the loved physicians were forced to band together for mutual protection; the object to "train" people to pay promptly, or

⁴¹Ibid., November 3, 1886.

⁴²Interview with J. L. Rumph, June 23, 1955.

see that a physician would refuse practice to anyone who owed another doctor. Physicians would take marketable produce for their bills if patients could not pay in cash.⁴³

The county was safe from the epidemic conditions of yellow fever and the like and most people died from the effects of malaria, dysentery, pneumonia, and tuberculosis.⁴⁴ Childhood diseases—measles, whooping cough, and mumps—killed many children. In 1889 fifteen children died of measles out of a total of 207 child deaths. Sometimes whole families died of typhoid fever and the years of epidemic can be easily told by inspecting the county cemeteries. In the first six months of 1882 there were 17 deaths from typhoid fever out of a total number of deaths of 101. The health officer's report for 1886 indicated malaria, dysentery, pneumonia, and tuberculosis as the leading causes of death.⁴⁵ Seventy-three persons died of malaria that year, 50 of dysentery, and 44 of pneumonia.⁴⁶

The first health officer for the county was selected in 1881 by the county court of commissioners. Dr. S. W. Hogan was elected to the job at a salary of \$50 per quarter.⁴⁷

⁴³Herald, December 6, 1886.

⁴⁴United States Census of 1880, XI, Mortality Statistics, p. 739.

⁴⁵Herald, February 17, 1886 (Report of C. M. Franklin).

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Ibid., January 20, 1881.

His duties were to keep a register of health, statistics and a record of births and deaths.⁴⁸ In his first report Dr. Hogan stated that it was quite hard to get accurate statistics because of failure of persons appointed in the districts to report. The health officers made efforts to give health information and establish a program of preventive medicine. Dr. Franklin urged the planting of trees "to distribute moisture in dry weather and maintain an equilibrium of gases in the atmosphere" as well as for beauty.⁴⁹ From time to time the officers wrote articles to the local papers on the treatment and prevention of various diseases.⁵⁰ They particularly urged citizens to practice sanitary habits around their homes and made a plea for more money to continue work in that field.⁵¹

In 1888 the county issued a quarantine against counties in Florida, Mississippi, and Alabama that had yellow fever. No persons, baggage, or freight were allowed in the county from those places except in passing through on the train.⁵²

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid., January 8, 1886.

⁵⁰ Herald, February 2, 1887.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid., October 5, 1888.

The duties of the county health officer were later expanded to furnishing medical care for those in the county care. This job was then let to the lowest bidder, and the work of the county officer was limited to this until the modern health service was formed.⁵³

The prohibition problem received much attention in the county. In 1885 there was considerable sentiment to prohibit the sale of whiskey. There were a great many cases of drunkenness among both white and colored, and the marshal in Union Springs had his week-end work cut out in arresting drunks and keeping order on the streets.⁵⁴ Letters favoring prohibition appeared in every issue of the local papers and it would appear that most of the county favored prohibition as none dared to defend liquor.⁵⁵ All of the church groups supported prohibition. The state senator, James T. Norman, was opposed to prohibition however, and was accused of catering to the Negroes for his stand.⁵⁶ W. C. Jordan, member of the legislature, was a strong prohibitionist and in 1886 a local bill was passed prohibiting the making, selling, or giving away of whiskey in Bullock County.⁵⁷ The acts provided for local option for towns of 250 or more, and Union Springs and Midway went along with

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Herald, November 24, 1886.

⁵⁵Ibid., February 18, 1885.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Acts of Alabama, 1886-1887, p. 800.

the rest of the county in banning liquor. The bill went into effect January 1, 1887, and after two months of prohibition the Herald reported "it (prohibition) has proved beneficial in diminishing crime and disorder."⁵⁸ The presence of a large Negro population was a great influence in effecting prohibition as the papers were full of cases of Negro drunkenness and crime committed while under the influence of liquor. The editor of the Reporter said in 1888: "retain prohibition..., the hands have more money and our merchants trade is better."⁵⁹ There was a growing sentiment for repealing the law and anti-prohibitionists declared that trade had decreased and there were more fights and disturbances than ever.⁶⁰ Moreover the county needed the revenue from the sale of liquor as the license was \$1,000 per year for a saloon. However, the Herald reported that ninety per cent of the people in Union Springs favored prohibition.⁶¹ The effect of the law was lessened because of the illegal sale of whiskey in the county. The Herald reported that the law was grossly

⁵⁸Herald, March 9, 1887.

⁵⁹Reporter, January 7, 1888.

⁶⁰Herald, January 30, 1888.

⁶¹Ibid., February 8, 1888.

violated and condemned the grand juries for returning no indictments.⁶² However, in the 1888 elections no issue was made of prohibition in the races for the senate and legislature and the Herald congratulated the leaders of the county who were too patriotic to submit this issue to the voters.⁶³

In 1891 the law prohibiting the sale of whiskey in Bullock County was declared unconstitutional to the dismay of many people. Church groups called for another law, but they never succeeded in getting another one passed.⁶⁴ The license on saloons was placed at \$1,675 per year but several were promptly opened, which would indicate that the whiskey business was quite lucrative.⁶⁵

Whiskey was forbidden in many local areas by laws forbidding the selling and drinking around most churches and schools. For instance, it was forbidden within six miles of Perote Academy and two miles of Liberty church and Central Academy.⁶⁶ Churches carried on temperance campaigns from time to time and many took the pledge during

⁶²Ibid., September 5, 1888.

⁶³Ibid., March 7, 1888.

⁶⁴Herald, April 29, 1891.

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Acts of Alabama, 1871-72, p. 178.

revivals. A Good Tempelars organization was formed at Union Springs in 1884. The purpose of this organization which boasted fifty members was to stop drinking and "to help drunkards to stop drinking."⁶⁷

There was never much agitation over woman suffrage in the county. The Herald of 1887 summed up the attitude of the county in these words:

We understand the ladies of the WCTU will advocate suffrage. Do you want to leave the quiet precincts of home and engage in the turmoil of public life? When women leave the position God fitted them for...they bring discredit to their sex.... Southern ladies do not need suffrage.⁶⁸

This attitude prevailed over the county and still prevails in the middle of the twentieth century.

⁶⁷Herald, October 8, 1884.

⁶⁸Ibid., December 14, 1887.

CHAPTER VI

POPULATION

Most of Bullock County was settled during the period 1830-1850. The area that was formed into Bullock County was settled and had acquired a stable population years before the county came into being. When the county was formed in 1866 the population came mostly from Macon and Pike Counties as these counties showed the largest loss in population.¹ The population of the county in 1870 was 24,474 of which 17,251 were Negroes and 7,223 were whites.² The foreign born population was almost negligible, only 86 persons. Of those born in America, 17,418 were born in Alabama, 4,204 in Georgia, 935 in South Carolina, 635 in North Carolina, 659 in Virginia, and 214 in Tennessee.³ The foreigners came from the various countries as follows: England, 6; Ireland, 16; Scotland, 7; Germany, 29; Africa, 13; France, 5; and Austria, 5.⁴ Thus it will be seen that the bulk of the native population was born in Alabama, with the remainder coming largely from Georgia and the Carolinas. In 1870, 8,298 of the people were under eighteen

¹United States Census of 1870, Statistics of Population, III, p. 345.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

years of age.

A comparison of the population may be made from the following table showing figures for 1870 through 1910:⁵

<u>Year</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>Colored</u>	<u>Foreign</u>	<u>Total</u>
1870	7,223	17,251	86	24,474
1880	6,944	22,119	40	29,026
1890	6,065	21,005	19	27,044
1900	5,846	26,097	34	31,944
1910	7,549	22,647		30,196

As may be seen the population of the county showed an increase from 1870 through 1890 but then started decreasing. However, this increase was in the Negro population, as the whites showed a steady decrease. The decrease in population during the 1880's was probably due to the hard times in the county which forced many to move away in search of jobs. Some had left for western states in 1876 taking their laborers with them. It was reported that the Union Springs Fire Company was almost depleted by emigration agents who were taking Negroes to the West.⁶ In an effort to halt this practice, emigration agents in Bullock County

⁵United States Census of 1890, III, p.11; United States Census of 1900, I, p. 9; United States Census of 1910, II, p. 47.

⁶Herald, March 23, 1876.

were required to pay a license fee of \$100.⁷ The Reporter stated in 1887 that "the negroes are rapidly moving away to north Alabama and farm labor is getting scarce."⁸ The editor asked what could be done to keep the Negroes in the county, and later admonished whites moving to Texas to keep enough money in their socks for the return journey home.

The Herald of March 14, 1888, reported a "great want of laborers in the county." The Herald of February 17, 1889, reported 125 families left the county and that 700 people had left on the Montgomery railroad for Memphis. Several efforts to attract immigrants to the county were made during this period. Trade and immigration issues of the local papers were printed denoting the soils, resources, and attractions of the county and sent north and west in the hope of attracting immigrants. In one edition H. B. Walker said that "the western farmer moving to this county would not be obstructed by the Negro, but would be materially assisted by them."⁹ Writing in an immigration edition the editor of the Herald said the paper hoped to provide a nucleus to a tide of immigration which would fill the vast spaces of the county "...with nice farm houses inhabited

⁷Acts of Alabama, 1876-1877, p. 225.

⁸Reporter, December 16, 1887.

⁹Herald, March 24, 1888.

by thrifty people instead of the log cabins of our inferior race...."¹⁰ Senator C. W. Rumph was in favor of any scheme to attract settlers but said: "Let us do nothing to encourage the scum of the old world to our county."¹¹ The efforts to attract white settlers to the county from other parts of the United States was an interesting part of Bullock history, but the schemes failed to encourage the migration that their proponents hoped for.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid., February 13, 1889.

CHAPTER VII

EDUCATION

Very little is known about the first schools in the section that is now Bullock County. The first settlers were interested in education and usually the school was the second institution established in a new community after the church. Churches often served as school buildings. At Bethel the log church was used as a school. Teachers were elected by the people at a mass meeting and those who owned books could bring them for study.¹ Teachers had little training and it is said that the teacher would be frightened at the appearance of a new pupil with an arm full of books.² A log school was taught by a Mr. Phillips in 1836 at Tanyard, and was attended by some of the Brabham, Dykes, and Stuckey families.³ At Midway in 1855 Colonel Doster taught a school and was reported "a good teacher—especially in the management of large boys."⁴ The Methodists and Baptists operated separate schools in Midway which were combined in 1867.

¹Herald, November 4, 1937.

²Ibid.

³Nell Dykes, "School Communities" (MS, Inverness High School, 1954).

⁴W. C. Jordan, "Midway" (MS, Department of Archives and History).

At Union Springs an academy was built in 1843, and in 1858 Mr. Butterfield opened a school for boys and girls, land for which was donated by the land company.⁵ A log school house was built at Aberfoil in 1840, and this same building was used as a church by Methodists and Baptists.⁶ Where there were churches, the schools were generally taught by the preacher, and denominations sometimes contributed something to the support of the school.⁷

The most important and interesting of the early schools were located at Chunnenugee on "the ridge." Here the wealthy planters established excellent schools for their children and they were able to hire professional teachers. In the early fifties two colleges were chartered and built at this cultured community—a Female College and a School for Boys.⁸ Dr. William Ellison, former president of Wesleyan Female College of Macon, Georgia, was engaged by Dr. N. B. Powell to take charge of the female institute. Among the staff of teachers was Count G. Krzeczowsky, of Poland, who taught French to the young ladies.⁹ The

⁵Alabama Conference Historical Society, op. cit.

⁶West, op. cit., pp. 414-415.

⁷A. L. Rumph, op. cit., p. 6.

⁸Minutes of Chunnenugee Garden Club (MS, Department of Archives and History).

⁹Letter of Count Krzeczowsky to Jonnie Blackburn, April 14, 1860 (Department of Archives and History).

citizens of the Ridge opened their homes to the children of nearby planters who wished to attend the schools. Since there were no hotels, the teachers were also welcomed into the homes of the planters.

The Civil War disrupted what school system there was in Bullock County and for a time after the war the only schools available were private ones. The private school was usually the best school to be had during the twenty-five years after the Civil War, since the public school system was slow in organization and was always hampered by lack of funds. Those who could afford the expense sent their children to the private schools located at Union Springs, Midway, Perote, and other communities. Pupils who learned their basic subjects at the free public schools often attended private schools for finishing work in Latin, Greek, French, advanced mathematics, music, and art. As the public school system became more organized in the county many schools were semi-private—operating on public moneys as long as they lasted, then by subscription to those who could pay.¹⁰ Except for the private schools at Union Springs, Perote, and Midway, nearly every school in the county operated in this fashion after 1880.

Competition for students was strong between the privately operated schools and each made a strong claim to

¹⁰Times, October 26, 1870.

the excellence of its instruction and curriculum. The Chunnenugee Male and Female Academy announced it would begin operation in July, 1886, for pupils of all ages and grades who would be carefully instructed and prepared for college.¹¹ F. X. Forster was principal of this school and fees were listed as \$20 for primary work, \$25 for the second class, including geography, English, and arithmetic; and \$25 for advanced work including ancient languages.¹² Miss Mary Threadgill maintained a music school in Union Springs where one could take lessons in piano at rates of three, four, and five dollars per month according to advancement.¹³ The Union Springs Female Academy announced that it would open in September, 1867. The school year was divided into two terms, fall and spring—the fall term lasting until January, and the spring term from then until the close, at which time there would be an annual examination.¹⁴ To the regular collegiate branches would be added Latin, French, Greek, drawing, and astronomy. Fees were \$30 per term for the collegiate department, and \$25 for the academic, with music and art extra. Rev. J. F. Ellison was principal of

¹¹Ibid., August 8, 1866.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid., July 31, 1867.

¹⁴Ibid., August 14, 1867.

this school, Mrs. M. S. Kimbrough associate principal, and Mrs. M. T. Kendrick music teacher.

E. J. McIvor advertised that his school in Sardis Church would prepare pupils for entrance to all universities and asked that parents should let him know whether their children would enter college or go into business, intimating that he would train them accordingly.¹⁵ The Midway Classical School advertised in 1866 that a citizens' committee guaranteed the ability, judgment, and training of its teachers, further stating that its rates were payable in gold, or ten dollars higher in currency.¹⁶

Advertisements of the private schools give a good idea of what the schools were like during the second half of the nineteenth century in Bullock County. The Midway Institute in 1873 had 112 pupils and boasted a corps of teachers inferior to none in the state.¹⁷ Compositions read at the closing exercises of this school were subjects such as "The Love of Applause," "A Mother's Love," and "None of Us Liveth to Himself." The schools held public examinations at the end of the year when the master could show what he had done for his pupils during the term and thus advertise for new pupils. At the closing of T. Hall's

¹⁵Ibid., November 23, 1887.

¹⁶Ibid., December 6, 1866.

¹⁷Herald and Times, April 2, 1873.

school at Midway the editor of the paper said that "to the anxious and interested parent the exercises of this systematically and practically methodized school were pleasant and satisfactory."¹⁸

The Perote High School under S. J. Boykin advertised a healthful location with good churches and cheap board with the principal. Boykin promised that special attention would be given those entering college.¹⁹ Parents expected schools to teach and enforce strong discipline and The Union Springs Male College promised to "teach and control boys." The Union Springs Academy advertised strict discipline with no intermingling of sexes on the playground.²⁰

The most important private schools were located at Union Springs, and these schools offered instruction to boarding as well as town students. The Union Springs Female College was established in 1886, being incorporated by T. J. Foster, C. H. Franklin, P. Blue, and H. C. Wilson. The charter of this institution gave it the right to confer degrees "as may be customary in institutions of learning of the highest grade in the United States."²¹ Its president, H. K. W. Smith, offered a practical as well as

¹⁸Herald, June 23, 1886.

¹⁹Herald, July 6, 1887.

²⁰Reporter, October 18, 1889.

²¹Acts of Alabama, 1886-1887, p. 371.

ornamental education with a "course of study as high and thorough as any female college in the state." Special attention was given to manners, health, and morals, as well as to reading and elocution. In 1888 rates were advertised as \$4 per month for the collegiate, with French and writing free of charge.²²

In 1891 T. A. Craven organized the Male and Female Institute to "do, study, and perform all things which may be necessary for carrying out the purposes of a regular college."²³ Many of the county's most distinguished citizens received their early education at the Female College or at the Craven school.

What public educational system there had been in Bullock County was disrupted by the Civil War and at the end of that conflict there was no system of public schools in the county. The difficulties of reconstruction made progress in education difficult and the first schools in the newly formed county were those operated privately.²⁴

However, the people never lost sight of the value of good schools, and they began efforts to establish a public school system in the county. The Times expressed the

²²Herald, September 26, 1888.

²³Acts of Alabama, 1890-1891, p. 1169.

²⁴Ibid., pp. 113-119.

sentiment of many of the better class of citizens in 1866 when editor Drake said: "We need an academy with first rate teachers in Union Springs ... and these teachers must be paid the proper inducements."²⁵ The first free schools in Bullock County were established for the Negroes by the Freedmen's Bureau in June, 1867, but there is no record of how well they were attended or what these schools taught. A county superintendent of education had been elected in 1867 at the first election, but he had no schools to superintend until 1869.²⁶ In that year C. J. L. Cuningham, superintendent of education, met with the county board to establish a system of free schools in Bullock County.²⁷ The superintendent and board resolved:²⁸

That it is in the sense of this committee, and so far from being derogatory to the character of our white people to engage in teaching colored schools, it is highly commendable and praiseworthy. That the duty of our good white men and women to teach and foster such schools, and in every way labor for the good and best interests of these people, seems to us apparent and pressing. It is hoped that teachers can be employed from our midst, sufficient in number to meet all demands. Schools will be established in the townships as soon as circumstances allow.

The first public schools were opened in Union Springs where two grades of white pupils were taught in the

²⁵Times, November 29, 1866.

²⁶\$1,119 was appropriated the county for 1868, but it was not drawn upon until 1870.

²⁷Ibid., March 3, 1869.

²⁸Times, March 31, 1869.

basements of the Methodist and Baptist churches.²⁹ The teachers were under contract for one month as the county had not received any funds from the state to operate schools. A free primary school for colored was taught by a white citizen, H. H. Smith, in Union Springs with an enrollment of about sixty pupils and other schools were established at Sardis, Aberfoil, and in township 14. The Times reported that additional schools would be set up as soon as teachers and suitable houses could be had—the greatest difficulty being lack of houses.³⁰

In 1869 there were 8,947 children of school age in Bullock County and of this number only 932 attended school.³¹ In that year a total of \$10,265 was appropriated for the education of these children—a little more than a dollar per child, but ten dollars for each child who actually attended school.³² There were 53 white schools and 29 colored schools with 56 teachers in the county in 1869, and these schools ran for an average length of 139 days with an average daily attendance of 365. The average salary paid to the teachers was \$111.³³

²⁹Ibid., May 5, 1869.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹9 Census, 1870, School Attendance and Illiteracy, p. 401.

³²Report of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Alabama State Documents (Montgomery, November 10, 1869), p.122.

³³Ibid.

The first annual teachers convention was held in August of 1869 and the superintendent urged all teachers to attend and to offer any suggestion upon topics connected with education.³⁴ Teachers were not interested in county conventions, however, as is shown by a comment in the Times of August 18, 1869. The editor reported that the county convention was a failure as only 9 teachers—all men—were present.

There was a pressing need for education in the county for in 1870 nearly half of Bullock's citizens were unable to read or write. The census of 1870 shows that 11,797 persons over the age of ten were illiterate.³⁵ Of these illiterates, only 628 were whites, the remaining 11,169 being colored. It was small wonder that the whites shuddered as the Negro was granted the ballot and virtually controlled the politics of the county.

By 1880 the public school system was firmly established in the county. School attendance had tripled that of 1870—the attendance of 1880 being 3,377 out of a school population of 8,369.³⁶ The presence of a large

³⁴Times, June 30, 1869.

³⁵Census of 1870, School Attendance and Illiteracy, p. 401.

³⁶Alabama State Documents, Report of Department of Education, 1880 (Montgomery, November, 1880), pp. 26-27.

Negro population made attendance low, but whites were as careless as Negroes in attending school in those years. Percentage wise, more Negroes attended school than did whites.³⁷ Sixty-three schools were taught in the county in 1880, all of them one teacher schools. Twenty-five of these schools were for white and 38 for colored. In 1880 a total of \$8,026 was spent on operating the system in the county, practically all going to pay teachers' salaries. Money was apportioned according to the white and colored school population; consequently the colored schools received the most money and colored teachers were paid higher salaries. The average monthly salary for white teachers was \$20.37 and for Negro teachers \$34.96, with the average of all only \$114.52. Average length of schools that year was 72 days. Schools were sometimes operated longer, but tuition was charged by the teachers and the schools operated privately.³⁸

In 1886 there were 103 schools taught in the county, with 67 teachers employed who received an average pay of \$135.85.³⁹ These schools were not operated simultaneously

³⁷Whites 1/3, Negro nearly 1/2

³⁸Alabama State Documents, Report of Department of Education, 1880, pp. 26-27.

³⁹Ibid., 1887, p. 35.

as teachers moved from place to place teaching school. Funds were divided among the townships in the county according to population, and schools were located in various communities. Since schools had to be within walking distance of pupils and there were not enough teachers, the teacher taught in one community until its share of the money had been used, then moved to another and started school again.⁴⁰ By 1894 nearly half of Bullock's children were attending school as compared to one-tenth in 1870. In that year 1,285 white and 4,314 colored children were enrolled in school at some time during the year.⁴¹ Ninety-five schools were taught by 101 teachers in 1894 for an average length of 67 days. In 1900 attendance had risen to 6,065, but less than half of Bullock County's school age children attended school that year. More than one-half of the white children went to school—1,665 of 2,351 of school age; but only 4,400 of 11,230 Negroes attended any school.⁴² However, the length of school taught had increased to 90 days for whites and 110 days for Negroes.

⁴⁰Herald, April 27, 1892.

⁴¹Alabama State Documents, Report of Department of Education, September 30, 1895, p. 31.

⁴²Ibid., 1900, pp. 136-138.

Fifty white and fifty-seven Negro teachers earned an average monthly salary of \$56 and \$25.30 respectively and taught one hundred schools indicating that there were possibly two or three schools that boasted more than one teacher.⁴³

In 1906 there were 11,808 persons in the county unable to read or write and of these 11,246 were Negroes. In comparison with the figures of 1870 it would seem that practically every white child attended school long enough to read and write but that still left nearly one-half of the Negroes illiterate.⁴⁴

The public school system in the county was hampered by lack of money and a lack of trained teachers from the beginning. All money for use in the county was appropriated by the state as there were no local taxes for schools. In 1869 \$10,265 was allotted to the county for the education for 8,947 children and \$11,253 was appropriated for 11,923 children, an average of about one dollar per child.⁴⁵ However, the number of children actually attending school increased six times from 1870 to 1900, thus decreasing the

⁴³Ibid., pp. 136-137.

⁴⁴United States Census of 1900, II, pp. 117 and 470.

⁴⁵Alabama State Documents, Report of Department of Education, September 30, 1894, p. 161.

amount of money actually spent per child.

It took practically all the appropriations to pay the salaries of teachers and the expenses of the county superintendent. In 1896 teachers' wages accounted for \$10,628 of the \$10,915 spent on schools—with no money listed spent for construction, libraries, or equipment.⁴⁶ Construction of schools was left to the local communities—which resulted in schools being taught in churches or any available vacant building. Parents were expected to pay for any improvements and to supply needed supplies such as wood for winter heating. It was said that in some communities only those pupils whose parents supplied fuel were allowed to warm by the large wood heater usually found in the center of every school room. Other equipment such as desks, chalk, erasers, and blackboards were supplied by charging incidental fees to pupils. Pupils purchased their own desks for use in the school and either sold or brought them home at the end of the term. In 1899 the state superintendent of education reported "the greatest need in Bullock County is school houses furnished with good desks and other fixtures."⁴⁷ The greater number of schools were in need of repair, and the report further

⁴⁶United States Census of 1890, Receipts of Expenditures on Public Schools, 1890, p. 470.

⁴⁷Alabama State Documents, Report of Department of Education, September 30, 1899, pp. 136-138.

stated that the Negroes were almost destitute of school houses. The report of 1900 stated that schools were poor and uncomfortable and complained of indifference of patrons in building decent houses.⁴⁸

School terms lasted as long as there was money available or as long as the teacher could obtain public subscription or tuition. By limiting the number of schools taught over the county it was possible to increase the length of the school terms by one month between the years 1880 and 1899.⁴⁹ Each pupil in a beat was allotted a share of the public funds and those who could not pay extra tuition could go to school only as long as their money lasted. Teachers sometimes refused to teach for what was available from the public funds and charged additional tuition, but they were required to teach every child as long as his share lasted at the rate of tuition.⁵⁰

Because of the low pay and uncertainty of tenure, the general quality of the teachers was poor, but no worse perhaps than any southern county at that time. Teachers were hired by local school trustees or school district trustees and could be dismissed at their pleasure—a practice which

⁴⁸Ibid., September 30, 1902, pp. 13-14.

⁴⁹Ibid., September 30, 1902, pp. 13-14.

⁵⁰Ibid.

often resulted in the hiring of teachers on a basis of kinship or other connection. This often led to trouble in schools and as stated in the report of Superintendent R. L. Prince "contention between trustees and patrons too often keeps people out of school."⁵¹ Teachers were hired on their own qualifications and a letter from a prospective teacher to a school trustee, written in 1896, is a good example of educational practices in the county:⁵²

Dear Sir: I write you for information about your school. Please tell me what you know and say nothing now. What does your school pay this. I am confident I do first class work and will not consider a school that could not guarantee at least \$300 a year. I am satisfied I can teach some of the teachers you have had. I have credentials from two schools, either larger than yours after I handled them awhile.

Schools seldom taught more than the basic "reading, writing, and arithmetic," although the Mt. Carmel High School, which was supported partly by tuition, boasted to teach Mathematics, Latin, Greek, bookkeeping, and English Literature.⁵³ In 1880 there were 3,377 pupils enrolled in the spelling course, 1,837 in reading, 1,080 in arithmetic, and only 456 in grammar of a total of 3,377 in school, indicating

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²A. G. Bush to William Lightfoot, April 20, 1896 (in possession of Mrs. Wilbur Pritchett, Thompson, Alabama).

⁵³Herald, July 15, 1891.

that spelling was the main course in the curriculum.⁵⁴

Textbooks were few and were left to the selection of the teacher, the book a pupil possessed often determining the grade he was placed in.⁵⁵ Often each pupil in a country school might have a different book for arithmetic or other subjects.⁵⁶

The county superintendents worked faithfully to improve the educational system of Bullock County and particularly to secure well-trained teachers. They were hampered by lack of money and often times by indifference on the part of teachers and the public. There was little unity among the teachers of the county and the superintendent of education, James Flewellen, reported in 1892 that his teachers "rarely stood up for one another and care nothing for the laws of courtesy."⁵⁷ The superintendents endeavored to unify and improve the profession by holding institutes, conventions, and training schools for teachers, but these were sometimes ill attended. In 1891 only 25 colored teachers of 59 in the county attended the annual institute for teachers, but these teachers were reported

⁵⁴Alabama State Documents, Report of Department of Education, 1880, p. 25.

⁵⁵Ibid., September 30, 1902, pp. 13-14.

⁵⁶Herald, April 27, 1892.

⁵⁷Ibid.

gradually becoming competent in mathematics, reading, spelling, and grammar.⁵⁸ In the institutes methods of teaching were discussed; specific lessons in language, geography, and other subjects were given, as well as lectures by various educational leaders. At one meeting Booker T. Washington lectured to the colored teachers on "What Shall I Wear and How Shall I Wear It." At two institutes held for each race in 1899, Superintendent T. A. Craven reported that only two-thirds of the white and three-fourths of the colored teachers attended, and stated further that "many of these are totally indifferent."⁵⁹ Thus the wonder is that so many managed to acquire any education at all. In spite of the efforts in the interests of schools, the Bullock County educational system remained about the same until consolidation of schools began around 1915.

⁵⁸Alabama State Documents, Report of Department of Education, 1891, p. 21.

⁵⁹Ibid., September 30, 1899, pp. 126-127.

CHAPTER VIII

RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENTS

Religious life has been a significant part of community activities in Bullock County. Perhaps the first thing done after a community was settled was the erection of a building for church services. These buildings, usually of logs, were the focal point of a community, often serving as church, school, and community meeting house. The church services and yearly revivals furnished an occasion for social contacts as well as filling spiritual needs. Some of the first churches had regular preachers but most of them were served by itinerant preachers who rode horseback over the country.¹ Methodist preachers generally served circuits and a new preacher would employ a guide until he was familiar with the country—there being few roads in the county.

The yearly revivals were eagerly awaited by old and young, for at them old friendships were renewed and new ones begun. Nearly every house in a community would be filled with visiting relatives and friends, in addition to preachers who must be entertained. Many early citizens of the county were converted at the camp meetings which sometimes lasted

¹A. L. Rumph, op. cit., p. 6.

two weeks. People from miles around came in buggies, wagons, horseback, or on foot loaded with provisions and bedding for a week's stay.² Preaching was outdoors or under bush arbors erected by the men for that purpose. Sometimes whole Methodist districts held camp meetings, as in 1872 when J. D. Rumph gave land ten miles west of Perote for a camp meeting site. There were ten tent holders from Perote and all were invited to "bring tents and substantial provisions and...pray that sinners be converted and the church revived."³ Camp meetings were often led by several preachers who, after a week's preaching, would be "hoarse in voice and worn in body."⁴

Negroes before the Civil War belonged to and attended the white churches, and many churches were built with lofts and galleries for use of the slaves. A missionary was sent annually by the Methodist church to the plantations around Perote to preach to the slaves and to catechise the children. When the Perote church was rebuilt in 1857 the old church was turned over to the Negroes.⁵ The first Negro churches were organized in 1867 in Union Springs after

²M. J. Crossley Diary.

³Herald and Times, July 17, 1872.

⁴Ibid., May 27, 1873.

⁵A. L. Rumph, op. cit., p. 6.

a colored preacher from North Carolina organized the African Methodist Church in the basement of the Methodist Church.⁶ The records of Bethel church showed requests by Negro members for dismissal to join Negro churches.⁷

In 1870 there were 39 churches with 7,550 members in Bullock County with Baptists and Methodists accounting for 7,000 of these.⁸ In 1890 there were 89 organizations with 10,555 members divided among Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Episcopal.⁹ Of these more than 8,000 were Negroes and the Baptist and Methodist churches accounted for 10,300 of the memberships.

According to the program of the Bullock May Festival in 1930 the first church established on Bullock soil was "Old Ebernezer" which was built for the planters along Chunnenugee Ridge. However it is generally assumed that Mt. Hilliard Methodist established in 1835 and Bethel Presbyterian Church established in 1837 are the oldest churches in Bullock County. The first church building at Mt. Hilliard was built of logs with benches of split logs and had a piece of lumber nailed down the center of the building to separate the men and women.¹⁰ Tallow candles

⁶ Times, April, 1867.

⁷ Lola Jordan, "Baptist Church of Midway," March, 1852-1900 (MS, Department of Archives and History).

⁸ United States Census of 1870, Selected State Churches, I, p. 529.

⁹ United States Census of 1890, III, p. 52.

¹⁰ E. J. Faulkner, MS, no title or date (in possession of Mrs. Wilbur Pritchett, Union Springs, Alabama).

were used for lights in the Bethel Church and as songbooks were limited the minister read the first two lines which were then sung by the congregation. A local preacher preached a sermon in the woods near Enon and in 1841 the Methodists built a church there after holding preaching for a while in a blacksmith shop.¹¹ Mt. Carmel Church was organized in 1841, Aberfoil in 1844, and the Union Springs Baptist in 1849. Other churches were organized over the county as more and more settlers came to the area, but most of the records of these churches have been lost or destroyed.¹² The major denominations in the county were Baptists and Methodists, and these along with Presbyterians and Episcopalians were the only denominations that established churches.

One of the first Baptist churches in the county was Mt. Carmel established in 1841, proclaiming in its articles of faith the belief in "baptism by immersion" and in "future rewards and punishments."¹³ Union Springs Baptist Church was founded in 1849 with a membership of nine and with Alfred Worthy as the first pastor. This church remained the only church in Union Springs for ten years until the Methodists organized a church. Midway Church was founded in 1852 with six members in a building neither "ceiled or

¹¹ Herald, November 4, 1927.

¹² Anson West, op. cit., p. 414.

¹³ Bethel records from 1850 were sent to North Carolina in 1950. Perote records were burned in 1939. Most of the others are lost or were destroyed.

plastered" and with seats behind the pulpit for colored members. Strict attendance was required of Midway male members who were expelled if absent more than three times without excuses.¹⁴ The Baptist Church has always been the largest and perhaps the strongest denomination in the county, having 16 churches with 1,000 members in 1890.¹⁵

The Methodists founded churches at Mt. Hilliard in 1835, one near Perote 1837, Aberfoil 1844, and at Chunnenuggee in the early 1840's. Union Springs Methodist Church was established in 1859, meeting in the Presbyterian Church until a building was erected in 1861. Rev. John Talley organized a Methodist Society around 1840 at Enon, meeting in a blacksmith's shop and using the anvil as a pulpit on which the Bible and hymn book lay.¹⁶ Enon and Chunnenuggee paid \$2,975 to Methodist missions in 1851, a sum which would indicate a thriving church as well as a prosperous community.¹⁷ Reverend Charles Laney, James Peeler, James Crossley, and a Reverend Barker were the first Methodist preachers in Bullock County. Methodist preachers literally had "hard roads to travel" because the districts they served were often quite large. In 1887 the presiding elder of Perote district complained that he had lost one preacher

¹⁴Mrs. Wilbur Pritchett, History of Mt. Carmel Church, (n. d.).

¹⁵United States Census of 1890, III, p. 52.

¹⁶West, History of Methodism, p. 414.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 683.

by drowning in Pea River and asked that the circuit be separated.¹⁸

There have been but two Presbyterian organizations in Bullock County. Bethel Presbyterian was organized in 1837 by the Scotsmen who settled that community.¹⁹ The church had thirty-five charter members and the first minister was Duncan McCormick who died in 1840 and is buried at Bethel. Union Springs Presbyterian was founded in 1853 by a small group of Presbyterians, including the Waughs, McDonalds, McCorkles, and Fosters, who asked several members of the Bethel Church to join them in order that a sufficient number be had for forming a church.²⁰ The first church was erected in 1855 with Reverend T. Root as pastor. The Presbyterians were generally staid and quiet reporting no "remarkable revivals" and their preachers were generally better educated than the Baptist and Methodists.²¹ In 1890 there were two Presbyterian Churches in the county with a membership of 229.²²

The Episcopal church was established in Union Springs in 1872 by Reverend D. B. Wadell; the courthouse served

¹⁸Herald, April 24, 1887.

¹⁹Ibid., November 4, 1937. Taken from material dating to 1850 and compiled by Miss Argula Bristow. This material was sent to North Carolina in 1950. Miss Bristow died in 1953.

²⁰Herald, April 4, 1883.

²¹Ibid.

²²United States Census of 1890, III, p. 52.

as the house of worship until money was raised to build a small chapel. An Englishman, R. Hoskey, and Mr. and Mrs. R. W. H. Kennon were the first members, with eight communicants added in 1873. In 1897 a beautiful brick church was built on a lot given by the Foster family. The membership for the Episcopal church numbered fifty in 1897 with members over the county worshipping in Union Springs.²³

In 1890 there were two primitive Baptist organizations in Bullock County with around fifty members.²⁴ In earlier days these churches were reported as being very popular, W. C. Jordan mentioning "Old Fellowship" at Midway as one of the early anti-missionary churches.²⁵

In 1890, the 7,800 Negro church members were divided between the Baptist, African Methodist, and African Methodist Episcopal Zion membership.²⁶ There were fifty-seven Negro churches with property worth around \$28,000. The Negro churches were characterized by the fervent sermons of their often ignorant preachers and the highly emotional responses of their members. The great Negro camp meetings were more largely social events than religious.

The churches made efforts to improve the morals of their members and were a great influence for good but in

²³Herald, August 24, 1897.

²⁴United States Census of 1890, III, p. 52.

²⁵Wilbur C. Jordan (MS, 1911. Department of Archives and History).

²⁶United States Census of 1890, III, p. 52.

general the Bullock County churches were never involved in any great discussion of public affairs. All churches were against liquor and the church made strong efforts to have the prohibition law passed in 1887.²⁷ Before prohibition and after the law was repealed, the sale or drinking of whiskey was prohibited within at least one mile of practically every church in the county.²⁸ The Baptist convention of 1888 called attention to the good effects of prohibition and insisted that it be maintained.²⁹ Drunkenness was the cause for dismissal from most churches, the Midway Baptist church adopting a resolution in 1876 that "any member seen drunk the second time would be expelled."³⁰ Perote records of the 1890's show members expelled for drunkenness and for non-attendance. In other churches members might be expelled for gambling, dancing, and using profanity. The county Baptist convention of 1888 adopted a five point program that sums up the attitudes of the church at that time. The program shows that the Baptists were interested in furthering their mission

²⁷Herald, November 24, 1886.

²⁸Acts of Alabama, 1866-1902. Liquor was prohibited within two miles of Liberty Church and three miles of Perote Church and school.

²⁹Herald, September 26, 1888.

³⁰Lula Jordan, "Baptist Church of Midway" (MS Department of Archives and History).

program and increasing their aid to aged ministers. On a county level the convention voted to "do more for the Negro churches and schools," to aid weak county churches, and to work for the continuance of the prohibition law.³¹

Relations between denominations were usually cordial. In many places such as Midway, Union Springs, and Aberfoil the first church established allowed other denominations to use their building until another could be built. In Midway Baptists and Methodists jointly sponsored a school before the Civil War which lasted several years. The first Sunday School in Union Springs was organized in 1888 by all the denominations together and was held at the Presbyterian Church.

Occasionally disagreements appeared in the local papers, such as the time Baptists and Presbyterians carried on a public argument on infant baptism and immersion.³² At the Methodist district conference held at Perote in 1887 some preachers complained of much intermarriage with Baptists and asked the church to stop this practice.³³ On the whole, however, denominational relations in Bullock County were seldom strained with petty arguments and disagreements.

³¹Herald, September 26, 1898.

³²Herald, June 29, 1880.

³³Ibid., August 24, 1887.

CHAPTER IX

SOCIAL LIFE

In general the most cultured social life was found in the settlement along the ridge where most of the wealthy planters of Bullock lived prior to the war. Here were found the mansions and beautiful gardens of the planters who opened their houses to all cultured people who came their way. Here on March 6, 1847, a group of men and women met to form a Horticultural Society for the purpose of having monthly exhibits of flowers, fruits and vegetables.¹ A few weeks later the society resolved to "lay out and build a public garden on Chunnenugee Ridge" and a committee of six was appointed to secure ground for this purpose.² As may be seen from the minutes, the Society grew larger and larger and many forms of entertainment were given at such suppers and monthly exhibits, with prizes for the different varieties of flowers, flower arrangements, and vegetables. As the Society and Public Garden developed it was determined by the members to hold an Annual Fair to be known as the Chunnenugee May Fair with prizes offered for the best specimen flowers, fruits, and vegetables, as well as flower arrangements. In 1852 the Society decided to

¹ Minutes of the Chunnenugee Horticultural Society, 1847-1855 (Department of Archives and History).

² Ibid. This and the following material is taken from the minutes.

spend \$100 on awards and premiums as well as to purchase 150 lemons and 300 pounds of ice for the annual fair. The fair became the social occasion of the year and visitors attended from afar. Rooms were added to the pavilion in the Public Garden so that it contained "a large salon, a dining room, hall and open pavilion." Here concerts were given by the young ladies and by a group of Negro musicians, elaborate dinners being held with desserts of "ice cream, strawberries, and pyramids of beautifully embossed cakes." Young and old danced to the music of the Negro musicians and many a young man lost his heart strolling in the maze of the "Lovers Know" in the gardens. With the advent of the war the gardens were neglected and as the planters' wealth declined they were never restored.³

After the Civil War the general hard times and woes of reconstruction served as a leveler in the social life of the county, thus there was never too much of what might be called "high society" in the county. The people reflected the attitudes of the Victorian era and that code was strictly enforced in courtship. Only the well-to-do young man could afford a horse and buggy in which to have his engagements with the young ladies. Girls vied for the attention of the young man who possessed a buggy and a pair of matched horses with which to take them driving on Sunday afternoons.⁴

³The Alabama Historical Association has placed a marker at the site of the gardens and a small garden is fenced in and kept by the Union Springs garden clubs.

⁴M. J. Crossley Diary (Rumph family, Perote, Alabama).

Church was the meeting place for courting couples, but home parties led to games such as "post office."⁵ Ice cream suppers and musicales were popular as were dinner parties. Young ladies were expected to be restrained in their conduct as stated by the Herald: "No proper young lady would kiss a man before she is married nor should a man expect her to."⁶

Families were close knit and many families experienced a steady stream of visiting relatives and friends. Most attended church, entertained the minister on Sunday, and were concerned with the welfare and health of the neighbors.⁷ The women were occupied with household duties, the servant problem being a familiar topic of conversation. Families who could afford to do so gave their daughters art and music lessons, and the wealth of a community could often be estimated if there was a resident music and art teacher.⁸

Among the social groups in Bullock County were the women's clubs, volunteer fire departments, military companies, fraternal orders, gun clubs and memorial associations. Negroes especially in Union Springs imitated the

⁵ Herald, March 18, 1903.

⁶ Ibid., January 18, 1893.

⁷ Letters and records of Rumph family, Perote, Alabama.

⁸ Ibid.

white organizations—the colored event of the year being the Emancipation Day celebration.

Every community in the county had some sort of ladies club. Among those in Union Springs were the Sans Souci Club, the Magazine Club, and the Ladies' Lyceum, while other communities had Memorial Associations, Literary Clubs, Missionary Societies, as well as three chapters of the United Daughters of the Confederacy in the county.⁹ The object of the Magazine Club was the "consideration of such topics that will stimulate intellectual and natural developments of its members in literature, art, science, and the vital interests of the day."¹⁰

Literary Societies were popular both among men and women. Such clubs as the Philomatic Society for young men, the Sans Souci Club, and Ladies' Lyceum were devoted to the discussion of literary subjects.¹¹ The Philomatic Society endeavored to set up a public library, but this was not realized until 1896 when the Union Springs Library was opened in the basement of the Baptist Church. The Ladies' Lyceum had for its object the establishment and support of a public library and it was mainly through its efforts that this institution was realized.¹²

⁹Herald, September 5, 1888, March 1, 1903.

¹⁰Ibid., March 18, 1903.

¹¹Times, September 1, 1869. Herald, September 5, 1888.

¹²Herald, March 18, 1903.

The Memorial Societies in Perote, Union Springs, and Midway devoted to keeping alive the cause of the South in the hearts of the people of Bullock County were important social institutions during the first three decades after the Civil War. The Ladies' Memorial Association at Perote was formed in 1874 by forty-three ladies to "perpetuate the beautiful custom of commemorating the services of our Confederate dead by putting flowers on their graves and having a suitable address delivered on the 26 of April."¹³ Memorial Day was the social event of the year at Perote. After decorating the graves and listening to speeches by leading figures of the day, a sumptuous barbecue was enjoyed by the crowds of guests who attended these annual affairs.

Ladies of the churches often gave benefits of different kinds to raise money for church work and other charitable purposes. Box suppers, oyster suppers, and sales of ice cream were used to raise money and offered occasions for community gatherings.¹⁴

Dancing was a favorite pastime in Bullock County although it was disapproved by the churches. Square dances were quite popular in "the country" areas of the county.¹⁵

Fraternal orders in the county included the Masons, the Woodmen of the World, the Ancient Order of Workmen, the

¹³Minutes of the Memorial Association of Perote, 1873-1937 (in possession of the author).

¹⁴Herald, and Times, May 14, 1873.

¹⁵Herald, March 18, 1903.

Knights of Homer, the Good Templars, and Odd Fellows as well as the Grange and Farmer's Alliances.¹⁶

The county fairs sponsored by the Grange and Alliance were among the year's notable events of a social nature. The first Bullock Fair sponsored by the Alliance was held in October, 1890, and according to the Herald was a "grand success."¹⁷ Everything from hogs to oil paintings were exhibited and \$410 was realized from the gate receipts. Horse racing was one of the popular attractions of this fair which lasted four days with one day reserved for Negroes.¹⁸

Among the fraternal organizations were the Negro aid societies of which the "Home Aid Society of Midway" composed "only of men of sound mind and body" was one.¹⁹ Nine others were chartered in the years 1882 to 1903, their objects generally being to "care for sick members and defray burial expenses of same."²⁰

An important social organization in Union Springs which also served a serious purpose was the volunteer fire

¹⁶Reporter, July 13, 1888.

¹⁷Herald, October 15, 1893.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Bullock County Incorporations, Book I, p. 98.

²⁰Ibid.

companies. There were two companies: A Hook and Ladder Company and a Steam Engine Company, which vied with one another in reaching the fire first, as well as in the lavishness of their annual social gathering. The annual parade and inspection of the fire companies was a gala occasion in Union Springs.²¹ The apparatus was decorated with flowers and paraded down main street where there were speeches and reports of the officers of the company and at times contests with visiting companies. The ladies were very much on hand at these occasions as one officer expressed his sentiments in this way: "Thanks to the ladies for the flowers...they (the ladies) are ever in the hearts of the firemen and no fireman can shrink from his duty when he has their encouragement." After the inspection the participants adjourned for a picnic lunch with croquet and dancing afterwards.²²

The military company, the Southern Rifles, was an important social organization for the men of Union Springs and the county. The annual encampment of the company was a festive occasion offering an opportunity for the men to dress in their colorful uniforms and impress the ladies with their military bearing.²³ The Herald reported the encampment of 1886 in this way "...the sham battle, the

²¹Herald and Times, May 27, 1873.

²²Ibid.

²³Herald, August 25, 1886.

booming cannon and rifles, the attack and repulse afford great enjoyment to 1,500 spectators, as well as the splendid banquet held after the affair."²⁴

An abundance of game made hunting a very popular sport among the men of Bullock County and in many communities gun and hunting clubs were formed. Bird suppers, 'possum suppers, and fish fries were delightful social occasions. The annual Union Springs Gun Club hunt of 1885 was led by D. S. Waddell and N. M. Bledsoe who with two teams of hunters killed 570 partridges.²⁵ After the hunt the members and their ladies were treated to a sumptuous banquet with a menu consisting of birds—all styles, 'possum, turkey, rabbit, oysters, ham, chicken salad, slaw, cranberries, pickles, sillabub, cake, ambrosia, fruits and nuts. After the banquet the guests adjourned to the opera house for dancing.²⁶

All-Day Singings and Sunday School picnics were social events of the summer in Bullock County. The Fourth of July singing at Macedonia Church was organized in 1872 and this well-known sing with its accompanying barbecue has been an annual event for nearly 85 years.²⁷ Young

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Herald, January 6, 1886.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Herald and Times, July 17, 1872.

people eagerly awaited the annual Sunday School outings which usually meant an excursion down to Inverness on the train, or to some mill and pond such as Solomon's Mill or Beck's Mill or Tilley's Mill.²⁸

Almost any occasion was celebrated by the traditional southern barbecue. A marriage, engagement, birthday, anniversary, or political rally, was reason enough for a barbecue to which friends and relatives by the dozens were invited. Barbecues ranged from family affairs to community and county wide celebrations.²⁹ The Business Men's League of Union Springs invited everyone to Union Springs in August, 1912, to enjoy a barbecue and other amusements including horse racing and public speaking. The menu for this event included thirty hogs, twelve goats, five yearlings, 100 gallons of coffee, 200 cakes, 1,000 loaves of bread, 500 gallons of lemonade and 200 gallons of ice water. The crowd which attended was estimated at nearly 5,000 people.³⁰

Other public entertainments were street fairs, circuses, such as Gentry's Dog and Pony Show, traveling players, and varied street entertainers such as strolling

²⁸ Herald, October 19, 1887.

²⁹ Herald, March 18, 1903.

³⁰ Ibid., August 12, 1912.

men with monkeys and bears, hand organs, and merry-go-rounds.³¹ The Herald reported in 1894 "the flying jenny has made the city a visit, as well as the monkey and hand organ man, and the voice of candy and fish dispensers is heard."³² Swiss bell ringers, a Shakespearean company, and a lady cornetist were reported well received.³³

Baseball was unusually popular among the boys and men of Bullock County and every community had its ball club.³⁴ Games were played between clubs and there was great rivalry and competition between the communities of the county. Practically every summer picnic and barbecue was followed by a baseball game in the afternoon and every community had a ball diamond where games were played on Saturday afternoons.³⁵ Negroes were especially fond of baseball and no Sunday afternoon in Bullock County was complete without a Negro ball game.

One of the holidays most celebrated was Christmas. Christmas trees, the visits of Santa Claus, dinners, dances, giving of presents to friends on Christmas morning, egg nog, and other events were part of the Christmas

³¹Ibid., December 19, 1894.

³²Ibid., February 3, 1879.

³³Ibid., May 25, 1888.

³⁴Ibid., October 8, 1884.

³⁵Ibid., June 1, 1893.

fun in Bullock County.³⁶ Fire crackers, Roman candles, and other fireworks were set off by the boys and men. The Negroes thronged to the towns of Union Springs, Perote, and Midway on Christmas eve to "do Christmas" and get "Christmas gif" on white friends. Stores were filled with apples, oranges, nuts, fancy candles, and other good things that were a traditional part of the Christmas season.³⁷

The Negroes of the county had counterparts to many of the white social organizations and events. There were Negro fire companies, brass bands, lodges, and ball clubs. The greatest social occasions for the Negroes were the Emancipation Day celebrations usually held in Union Springs or at the Negro camp meeting ground at Chunnenugee. The day was celebrated by listening to speeches, music, singing, and eating barbecue. Parades often led by brass bands marched up and down the streets and the day was a general holiday for all colored in the county.³⁸ The colored camp meetings at Chunnenugee were sometimes attended by as many as thirty thousand Negroes and would last a week. This annual event was characterized by drinking, quarreling, preaching, crap games, fights, and the noise of the food and drink vendors on the outskirts of the meeting. According to the Herald, this meeting furnished

³⁶Ibid., December 23, 1885.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Ibid., June 1, 1892.

a year's work for the grand jury annually.³⁹

Saturday in Union Springs, Perote or Midway was a social occasion for the county farmers of both races. The main objective was generally to see and talk to friends and "find out the news."⁴⁰ A visit to the drugstore or the barber shop was a happy event for children as well as adults, and stores such as C. W. Rumph's at Perote sold many a stick of candy and bottle of soda water. Every town had its "loafers bench" with continual domino and checker games. "Oak Tree Club" at Union Springs was the focal point for news and events of the community of interest to males.⁴¹

³⁹Ibid., September 27, 1893.

⁴⁰Interview with J. L. Rumph.

⁴¹Ibid.

CHAPTER X

LAW

The laws of a county give a good background not only for a study of the political events, but also of the ideals and attitudes of the life of the people.

The first laws passed concerning Bullock directly were of course passed after 1867, but the city of Union Springs has some interesting statutes on its book which throw some light on the activities of the section. In its early history the town must have been a rather rough place as the city records are filled with cases of "raising a riot" and of fights.¹

The town had strict laws relating to Sunday selling and to playing cards and gambling. An ordinance passed in 1848 reads: "All persons found selling goods or merchandise on the Sabbath shall be fined not less than \$10" and a later one established a \$10 fine for "any person playing cards or any game of chance."²

As the county around Union Springs attracted more and more planters with their slaves, the town found it necessary to enact laws regarding slaves and their actions. A law enacted in 1854 provided "one hundred lashes for any

¹Town Records of Union Springs, Alabama, 1844-1860 (in possession of F. H. Anderson, Union Springs, Alabama).

²Ibid., May 8, 1844 and July 25, 1854.

slave selling or giving away spirituous liquors."³ One year later a curfew law was passed which provided "all persons of color found outside their master's premises after ten p. m. from April to September and after nine p. m. September to April with or without a pass shall receive forty lashes."⁴ Possibly alarmed by the actions of the abolitionists, the council resolved in 1856 "that it is highly inexpedient that preaching shall be held by Negroes within the town and we recommend that the citizens discontinue it."⁵

Some of the local acts of the Alabama legislature are of more than passing interest in a study of the political and moral interests and attitudes of the county. One of the most controversial acts was the act prohibiting the sale of whiskey which went into effect January 1, 1887. This act was later declared unconstitutional, and prohibitionists in the county were never able to get another passed, though efforts were made to do so.⁶ However, most churches and schools had local acts that prohibited the sale and drinking of whiskey within a certain limit, and

³Ibid., July 25, 1854.

⁴Ibid., July 4, 1855.

⁵Ibid., 1856

⁶Acts of Alabama, 1892.

Act No. 107 of 1888 placed a fine of \$5 to \$100 for public drunkenness.⁷

The practice of many people to allow their stock to run out over fields and crops led to the enactment of a stock law for Bullock County in 1880. This local act was introduced by Representatives Powell and Armstrong and would force owners to take up their stock or be liable for the damages.⁸ However, many people objected to this seeming infringement on their rights and influence from the county forced the bill to be amended to exclude Suspension and Farriersville beats from the operation of the law. The stock law went through a series of amendments from its enactment in 1900 and was rendered practically worthless by political influence. The law was amended in 1885 to exempt part of township 11 from the law. In 1883 the law was amended to permit hogs to run at large from November to March, and other stock from December to March in Inverness beat.⁹ In 1895 it was further amended to permit a turnout period in Perote and Indian Creek beats, and in 1899 to allow a charge of five cents for stock taken up.¹⁰

⁷Acts of Alabama, 1889, 1886-1900. Liquor was prohibited within 6 miles of Perote.

⁸Acts of Alabama, 1880-81, p. 189.

⁹Ibid., 1882-1883, p. 205.

¹⁰Ibid., 1898-1899, p. 1006.

The abundance of game made Bullock County an ideal hunting and fishing spot, and these sports were well loved by the men of the county who prided themselves on their hunting prowess. The great numbers of birds and fish led to wasteful and unsportsmanlike practices. In 1880 an act was passed to prevent the seining, trapping, or netting of fish.¹¹ However, most people resented any limit to what they considered personal actions, nor could they see the need for game protection when there was such abundance and this act was repealed in 1893.¹² In 1894 Representative George Williams secured a local act for Bullock for "the preservation of fish, game, and birds" which placed seasons on quail, wild turkey, and doves, and made it illegal to seine or net fish.¹³ The act further provided a five to twenty dollar fine upon conviction with one-half of the fine going to the informer. This law was not well received and received a great deal of criticism in the local paper.¹⁴ A letter from Perote objected to the game law and stated "...The new game law does not meet the approbation of the majority of our citizens."¹⁵ As no provision was made for the apprehension of offenders

¹¹ Ibid., 1880-1881, p. 188.

¹² Ibid., 1894-1895, p. 310.

¹³ Ibid., 1894-1895, p. 146.

¹⁴ Herald, December 19, 1894.

¹⁵ Ibid., April 3, 1895.

the law was never strictly enforced in the county.

During the 1870's farmers suffered from troubles which were exasperating to them although they did not get as much publicity as political troubles. There was much farm produce stolen at night by Negroes and D. A. McCall introduced a bill in the legislature providing that no farm produce should be bought, bartered, exchanged or delivered except between sunrise and sunset.¹⁶ In 1879 a bill was passed regulating the weighing and sampling of cotton in Bullock County. This act contained twelve provisions among them being one that required all persons weighing cotton to take an oath to give the correct weight. Other provisions required entering of cotton weights on receipts, prohibited sellers from weighing cotton except in presence of the buyer, and provided a fine of not more than \$500 for violations.¹⁷

Grand juries of the county often complained of violations of the Sabbath and other related offenses, but there were never any county wide laws passed concerning Sunday or regulating the morals of the people.¹⁸ Union

¹⁶Herald and Times, January 25, 1871.

¹⁷Acts of Alabama, 1878-1879, p. 210.

¹⁸Herald and Times, February 3, 1879; Times, September 1, 1869.

Springs had so-called "Blue Laws" prohibiting the sale of merchandise on Sunday. They were never strictly enforced, although most merchants closed on Sunday as a matter of course.¹⁹ In 1887 an attempt to sell ice on Sunday brought on an effort to enforce these laws by some of the local preachers. Writing in the Herald one declared: "There is no need for ice on Sunday.... This is a deliberate attempt to desecrate the Sabbath.... Break it down and we will have Sunday baseball, and races.... Already we have Sunday mails..., a blot on our civilization."²⁰ The Blue Laws were not repealed, but all efforts strictly to enforce them were a failure as most people saw no great harm in "buying ice on Sunday."²¹

¹⁹Herald, July 20, 1887

²⁰Ibid., August 10, 1887.

²¹Ibid., July 20, 1887.

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